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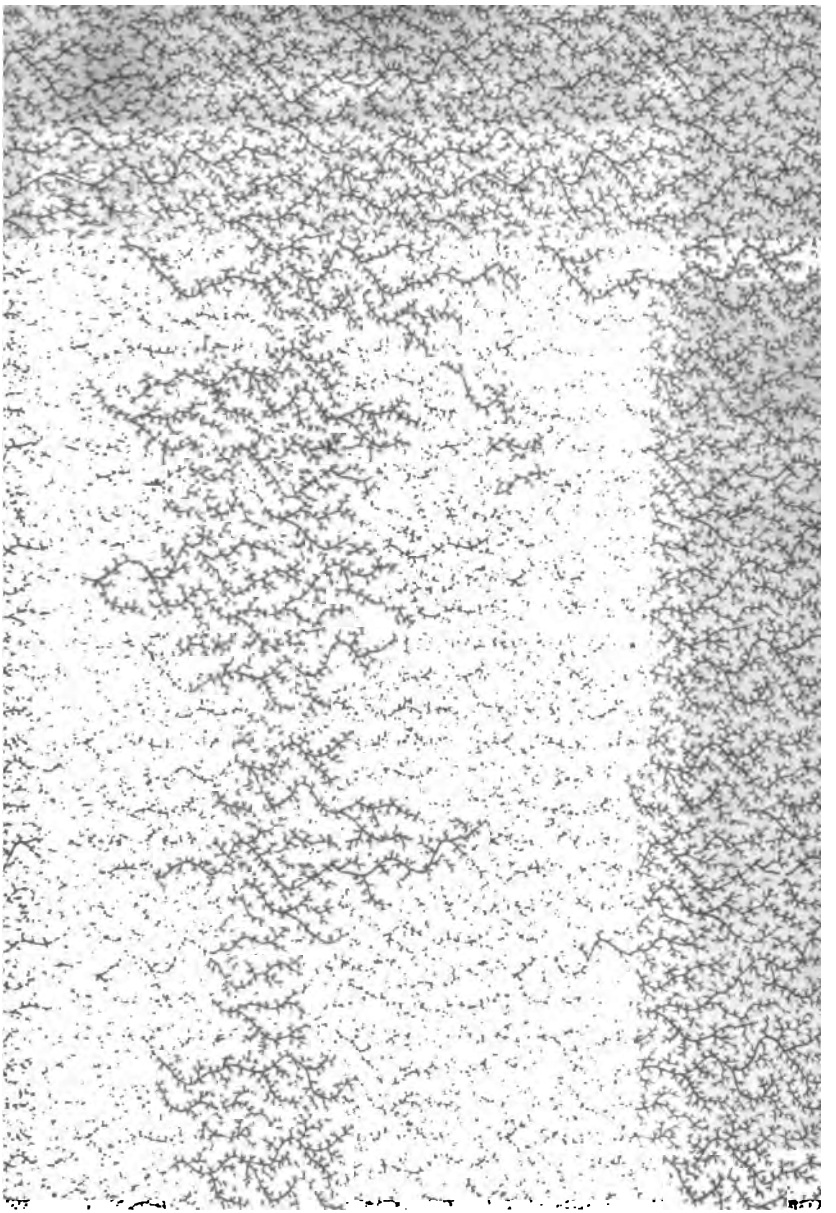

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN MOORE, M. D.

VOL. V.

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN MOORE, M.D.

WITH

MEMOIRS

OF

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY

ROBERT ANDERSON, M.D.

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A

VIEW

OF THE

COMMENCEMENT AND PROGRESS

OF

ROMANCE.

When the Romans, by the superiority of their military discipline, had subdued all the nations within their reach, they endeavoured to render them more civilized. Were we to give credit to some of their poets and historians, we should imagine that they undertook the first from the pure view of accomplishing the second. Yet no history, sacred or profane, furnishes examples of the inhabitants of one country entering forcibly into the territories of another, from the mere impulse of benevolence. It is therefore probable that the Romans were influenced by the same kind of good-will to the people they conquered, that the Spaniards were to the Mexicans, and the European traders on the coast of Guinea are to the negroes.

A late elegant historian informs us, that 'as a *consolation* for the loss of liberty, the Romans communicated their arts, sciences, language, and manners, to their new subjects.' *

That the Romans instructed the Britons in certain arts is undoubted: but it was merely to render them more profitable slaves to Rome. Of one art, however, the Ro-

* See Dr. Robertson's View of the State of Europe, Sect. I.

mans took particular care to keep them ignorant; namely, the art of war; that art which secured to themselves the government of other nations.

> Tu regere imperio populos Romane memento
> Hæ tibi erunt artes——

The historian above mentioned adds, 'that the vanquished nations were disarmed by their conquerors, overawed by soldiers kept in pay to restrain them, and given up as a prey to rapacious governors, who plundered them with impunity.'

What kind of consolation is this! Even had those wretched people been less exposed than they were, to the rapacity of the Roman prætors sent to govern them—had they been allowed to retain a considerable share of the riches they were taught to acquire; in what an abject situation would they still have been, beholding their masters eternally before their eyes, and being conscious that they held the fruits of their own industry by no surer tenure than the pleasure of those masters?

The earliest inhabitants of this island of whom we have any records, who resisted the invasion of Cæsar, and fought in defence of their country under Caractacus and Boadicea, barbarians as they were, appear infinitely more respectable than their civilized posterity, who lived tamely under the Roman yoke. Two Roman legions were sufficient to keep all the accessible parts of this island in subjection for above three hundred years. What an idea does this convey of the superiority which the military discipline of the Romans gave that people over the rest of mankind!

Those legions were at last called from Britain, to preserve more valuable conquests: but such is the debasing influence of long-continued subjection on the human mind, that the wretched Britons were unable to preserve the independence which fortune had restored to them. Unable to resist a handful of Caledonians, who rushed from that mountainous country which the Romans had never subdued, the effeminate Britons applied for aid to

their ancient masters with abject eloquence.—' The barbarians,' said they, ' chase us into the sea, the sea throws us back on the barbarians, and we have only the miserable choice of perishing by the sword or the waves.'

Before they were civilized by the Romans, the Britons would perhaps not have described their dilemma in such pathetic terms; but they would assuredly have used more energetic means of extricating themselves. The Romans, however, were at this time so violently attacked by Attila, that they paid little attention to the groans of the Britons; who, finding they had nothing to expect from Rome, applied for assistance from Germany, and received an army of Saxons into their country.

It soon occurred to those auxiliaries, that the country they were able to defend, they would be able to conquer. Accordingly, after they had repelled the invaders from the north, they began to seize the possessions of the southern inhabitants; murdering or driving the original proprietors to the Highlands of England; namely, to Wales. In the same manner, when the conquerors extended themselves into Scotland, they appropriated the Lowlands to their own use, and drove the original inhabitants to the Highlands of that country. The inhabitants of Wales and of the Highlands of Scotland are therefore descended from the same original British ancestors, and at this day speak a language essentially the same; the difference being only what must take place when two divisions of a people, speaking the same language, are kept from all communication with each other for a series of years. That the present inhabitants of England and of the Lowlands of Scotland are in like manner descended from the Saxon invaders is highly probable, from the circumstance of their speaking a language that is essentially the same. Considering the wars and enmity that existed for many centuries between the Scots and English, this could hardly have happened but from their having descended from the same people.

When the Saxons were called to Britain, they were free

men. The Britons, who called them, had been long debased by the Roman yoke. The difference this makes is prodigious.

Much has been said and written of late to show the ill effects of liberty; not surely in the intention of disgusting the inhabitants of this island with that which has been one great basis of their prosperity, and has so long rendered them the envy of surrounding nations; but merely, it is to be hoped, with a view to prevent the abuse of freedom, which, like the abuse of every thing else that is estimable in life, becomes pernicious in proportion to the value of the thing abused.

Liberty and property are the two most valuable blessings men can possess: but when a dread of the one being in danger preponderates in a nation, they are apt to lose all solicitude about the other. Those who supinely endure encroachments on their political freedom, while they are tremblingly alive to whatever they are told may endanger their property, forget that when the first is gone, the second must soon follow. They may be deprived of it more methodically, but not more certainly.

To render wealth a permanent blessing to Great Britain, its inhabitants must preserve in its purity that constitution which their ancestors established in 1688. They must retain, as Dr. Smollett finely expresses it, in his Ode to Leven Water,

> ——— hearts resolv'd, and hands prepar'd,
> The blessings they enjoy to guard.

After having deprived other nations of freedom, the Romans themselves were deprived of it; and with it lost the love of their country, and all that elastic energy of mind which renders free-born men superior to the rest of mankind. The indolent and luxurious inhabitants of Italy shrunk from the fatigues of war; foreigners were bribed or compelled to fight their battles; the armies on the frontiers relaxed in discipline. It is worthy of observation, that military discipline is most cheerfully submitted to in the armies of nations which have maintained

their civil liberties. The Greeks were always better disciplined than the Persians; and the Turkish armies are the worst disciplined troops in Europe. Having lost the energy of freedom, the Romans could not withstand those attacks which their ancestors would have repelled with ease.

The Saxons who invaded England did not imagine it possible that men who had tasted the sweets of independence could remain quietly in a state of subjection, and therefore thought it necessary, for their own secure possession of the country, to extirpate great numbers of the natives. This inhuman policy was carried greater lengths by those Saxons, than by any conquerors of whom we have an account in profane history. They conquered exclusively for themselves, not for the benefit or aggrandizement of the state to which they had belonged, or of a country to which they never meant to return. The conquered lands were considered as a property which all had contributed to acquire, and in the division of which all had a right to share.

By what rule the division was made is not known: but the respect in which they held their chief, and the conviction they entertained that it would be for the general safety to adhere to him, and rally under his standard, appear, from the large share of the lands that were allotted to him, and which, in many instances, were afterwards called crown lands, or royal demesnes. This veneration for the chief appears in a still stronger light, from his being appointed to divide the rest of the lands among the inferior officers; and from these officers receiving their portions on condition of attachment to him, and of serving him in war at their own expense. Those inferior officers, who were the first barons or nobility, after retaining a certain proportion of their share of the land in their own hands, for the support of their dignity and household, were obliged to divide the remainder of what was allotted to them among their followers; that is to say, the soldiers who had in the course of the war been imme-

diately under their command. The common soldiers received their portions from their officers or barons on the same condition that the latter had received theirs from the sovereign. He who conferred the land was called the superior; and he who accepted it on the above condition, the vassal. The ceremony on these occasions seems of an humiliating nature; the vassal falling on his knees, and declaring himself the creature *(homo)* of the superior. This was, from the Latin word, called doing homage. Humiliating as this ceremony may appear, the proudest thane submitted to it; and afterwards kings themselves did not scruple to go through it, on account of lands or provinces which were their property, but situated on the territories of another sovereign.

Those new proprietors were bound to protect their acquisitions, not only against such of the natives as had been spared, but also against new hordes of their own countrymen. The common danger united them together, and secured their obedience to the chief as much after they resided in an established habitation, as when they marched in the field.

This permanency of command increased the superiority of the leaders over the subordinate, and accustomed the minds of the lowest to respect and obedience, in peace as well as in war. Some of the barons had certain offices in the sovereign's household conferred on them, which descended, with a title, to their posterity.

At first, even the most powerful of the officers were considered as greatly subordinate to the chief or sovereign; but in process of time, the particular vassals of each great officer, especially of those who lived at the greatest distance from the residence of the sovereign, relaxed in attention to him, and directed it entirely to the chieftain, whose power and influence they daily saw and felt. This oblivion of the sovereign and attachment to the chieftain augmented, when the latter assumed supreme jurisdiction over all within their own districts. At length these petty chiefs, by combinations with each other, became, in a great

measure, independent of and formidable to the sovereign himself.

In this state of society continual jealousy and alarm must have prevailed. The barons built fortresses or castles on the most inaccessible situations of their lands. Emulation and rivalship between the chiefs produced rapine and bloodshed among the people, particularly at times when the crown had not the power to command tranquillity. A considerable baron, in those days, was above law as much as the sovereigns of Europe are at present. When, tempted by the weakness or misfortune of any of his neighbours, a baron determined on war, he did not indeed publish a manifesto, enumerating his grievances, but he equally issued orders to take, burn, and destroy. The wretched populace were exposed to all the horrors of war, and the families of the chiefs to the most shocking effects of hatred and revenge. Robberies and murders on the highway were frequent. The castles of the barons were sometimes the receptacles of hired banditti. Bands of robbers were regularly formed under leaders of their own choosing, by which travelling was rendered highly dangerous. Whole villages were pillaged. The castle of the baron was often blockaded. Women were exposed to violences of every kind, and the possessions of the ecclesiastics themselves were not always safe from the rapacity of those plunderers.

When wickedness and impiety had arrived at this height, it was proposed that the valour and generosity of individuals should form a supplement to the weakness of law. Combinations were formed for the protection of ecclesiastics, of virgins, of widows, of orphans, and for the redress of the injured in general. The utility of those associations, in checking the abuses against which they were formed, became apparent. The reputation acquired by some, roused the emulation of many. All the young men of family, who in those days were almost the only persons who could live independent of bodily labour, entered into these societies; from which, when afterwards

patronized by the sovereigns as well as the church, the order of chivalry originated.

The precise period at which this famous order was first established, it is difficult to determine: but soon after it had been established, it was thought expedient to educate children with the express view of accomplishing them for it. The choice was made from the children of noble families. War, religion, and love, were the pillars of this famous institution, which refined and gave fresh lustre to that gallantry towards the fair sex, which varnishes and gilds the roughness of Gothic manners.

At seven years of age, the children destined for the profession of chivalry were removed from their father's houses to the court or castle of the sovereign. As their education was in some points severe, and required steadiness and strength, boys of stout constitutions and intrepid minds were preferred to all others of equal rank. The first situation they obtained, however, was that of pages, during which they waited at table, and performed other menial service, which were not considered, in those days, as humiliating. Their address and manner were attended to. They were taught to dance and play on the harp; and while they were instructed in the religious tenets which it was their duty to believe, it was at the same time the business of certain ladies of the court to teach them the metaphysics of love, and impress on their minds an early devotion for the sex.

The contrast between the manners of the Greeks and Romans and those of the Goths is not so surprising in any point as in that of their behaviour to the fair sex; the former seeming to have bestowed but a very moderate share of attention on the women, and to have permitted them little share in conversation or in general society; whereas the latter are said to have believed that something sacred and prophetic belonged to the female sex, and on that account sometimes consulted them in the most important exigencies of the state. Even amidst the horrors of their invasion of the empire, while they spread

bloodshed and devastation among the men, they forbore from any violence to the women; and after these same Goths had become Christians, it was not in the power of the priests to impress higher veneration for any saints in the calendar on the minds of the youths educated for chivalry, than the court instructresses did for those ladies whom each youth chose as the mistress of his heart.

At the age of fourteen, the young candidate, from the rank of page, was promoted to that of esquire. The esquires were of different kinds. One was called the carving esquire; his duty was to attend in the hall at dinner, and carve the various dishes with dexterity, and distribute them among the guests: but the esquire who was chosen for the companion of his patron, was taught the use of the spear, the sword, and the battle-axe, and accustomed to exercise under the encumbrance of armour.

At twenty-one, he was received into the order of chivalry. The ceremonies on this occasion were calculated to make a deep and lasting impression. The youth was obliged to pass the preceding night in prayer and acts of devotion in a church, attended by a priest, to whom he made a full confession of his sins; after which he received absolution, took the sacrament, bathed, and being dressed in white raiment, and having heard a sermon adapted to the occasion, he advanced, presenting a sword which the priest girded to the side of the young man, after it had been consecrated by a blessing. He then moved to the person who was to confer the order, and fell before him on both knees with his hands joined, and having sworn to maintain the honour of religion and of chivalry, he was, by the assistants, dressed in complete armour; in doing which, they always began by attaching the spurs. He again sunk on his knees, and was dubbed by the sovereign, who gave him three touches with the flat of the sword on the shoulder, saying, 'I invest thee with the order of chivalry, in the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George. Be faithful, bold, and loyal.'

At the end of the ceremony, the young knight generally mounted his horse, which stood ready at the church door, and poised his lance, while his charger pranced and bounded with a pride equal perhaps to that of his master.

The desire of fame, the obligations of religion, and the enthusiasm of love, being thus united, it is not surprising that the professors of chivalry were inspired with an uncommon ardour for occasions of distinguishing themselves. In consequence of which the freebooters who infested the open country were soon dispersed, the injuries done to widows and orphans in a great measure redressed, and the violators of virgins punished. But the military spirit of the knights continued, after the objects on which it had been exerted were removed.

The fashion of challenging to single combat had probably existed among the Gothic nations long before the period of which we are now treating, but duels only took place in case of some accidental quarrel; and although those happened pretty frequently, it would appear that they did not occur so often as to satisfy the ardour of the knights, and prevent their spears from rusting. In an age when the higher orders of mankind had few sources of amusement, and in countries where commerce or agriculture afforded little or no employment for the lower class, a state of languid tranquillity was more insupportable than a state of war: but though many wished for the bustle of hostilities, a plausible pretext for beginning a war did not always occur. In those days, the people of every nation thought they had a right to assume a new form of government when they pleased, for themselves: but none thought they had a right to disturb the governments of their neighbours by missionaries, to spread their political opinions among them. And it never occurred to any nation, that the only or the best means of securing their own constitution was to make war against another. Those and other ingenious causes of war, which have since, in the progress of refinement, been used so success-

fully, did not present themselves to the unenlightened minds of men in that age of darkness.

In this dilemma, when so many were eager for fighting, and none could suggest a good cause of quarrel, a lucky thought struck one knight-errant, which in some measure removed the difficulty. He caused it to be proclaimed, 'that the lady he had chosen for the object of his adoration was not only the most beautiful, but also the most chaste and accomplished woman in the universe; that he was ready to maintain this by the power of his arm, and to punish as a blasphemer whoever should assert the contrary.'

This was a challenge which could not fail being accepted. The combat that ensued was the harbinger of many others on the same principle; and every knight, whose bosom panted for an opportunity of distinguishing his love of glory or of his mistress, could indulge his fancy when he pleased.

The formalities with which those combats were attended rendered them amusing to the public, and peculiarly flattering to the ladies who were the subject of dispute. The rival beauties were on those occasions seated in a conspicuous manner. Whatever had been the opinion of the spectators with regard to the respective merits of the ladies previous to the solemnity, they now suspended their judgment until, by one of the champions being unhorsed or slain, it was decided that the mistress of the victor should in future be considered as the fairest, chastest, and in all respects the most accomplished of the two.

When women of family were shut up in castles, forbid all familiarity with men, and seldom admitted into any society but that of their nearest relations, it is evident that the manners of the age combined with the native modesty of the sex to secure the virtue of the ladies.

This extreme difficulty of access contributed to elevate the passion of the lovers to that enthusiastic height which we are told was then so common, and which is believed now to be so rare. The reverse, however, ought to have

been the case; for if the castles or fortresses, in which women of high birth were shut up, made their virtue more secure, they rendered it also less meritorious. The women of rank and fashion of the present day, who are so much more exposed to attack, are entitled to higher admiration from resistance.

The ardent knights-errant above mentioned were soon relieved from the necessity of displaying their courage in combats with each other. The most striking and extensive instance of human infatuation that ever occurred, furnished them ample means of manifesting it in a cause infinitely more important in the eyes of their contemporaries, and equally absurd in those of posterity; namely, that of recovering the city of Jerusalem and the holy sepulchre from the infidels.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, Gregory VII had entertained the idea of uniting the Christian powers against the Mahometans, on this very pretext. He foresaw that such a project must necessarily augment his own power and influence: but this ambitious pontiff had made so many attacks on the civil power of princes, that they regarded with a suspicious eye whatever he proposed; and, notwithstanding the ignorance and superstition of the age, he was unable to carry his project into execution.

While the Arabians were in possession of Palestine, they gave no molestation to the Christians who came on pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem. On the contrary, as the infidels reaped some advantage from the number of pilgrims, they were treated rather with kindness. The ardour for this meritorious journey was augmented also by the respect shewn to those who had made it, on their return to their own countries. Besides, an opinion was pretty prevalent in Christendom, about the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century, that the world was very near a close. This notion determined great numbers of Christian inhabitants, of even the most remote parts of Europe, to make a visit to the Old Jerusalem during their life, as a probable means of secur-

ing them a place in the New after their death. But when the Turks tore Syria from the Arabians, and gave the law in Jerusalem, the Christian pilgrims were insulted by the new conquerors, who ridiculed the object of their adoration. The pilgrims, on their return, filled all Europe with accounts of their own sufferings, and of the dreadful impiety of the Turks. A native of France, known by the name of Peter the Hermit, who had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, wandered over Europe, preaching the duty incumbent on the believers in Christ to avenge the insults which had been offered to his followers, and to regain his sepulchre from the infidels. What Pope Gregory durst not attempt, the hermit Peter accomplished. An enthusiasm for the crusades overspread Europe. It met the military spirit of the nobles, and was thought by the tradesmen and peasants a more easy and certain method of obtaining the favour of Heaven, than the hard labour, fasting, and penances to which they were subjected at home. The numbers that assumed the cross, which was the badge worn by the crusaders, is almost incredible. Every country of Europe was abandoned by thousands of the bravest and stoutest of its inhabitants. A certain number of knights, however, remained in each, to whose protection were consigned the wives and daughters of those who went to the holy war; so that the spirit of chivalry was kept up at home, while it glowed with augmented ardour abroad.

After overcoming a thousand unexpected difficulties, and having obtained many victories, the Christian army, diminished to a tenth of its original number, arrived at Antioch. The siege of that place had continued nine months, when the spirit of those enthusiasts began to droop.

A numerous army of infidels marched to the relief of Antioch. Many of the Christians deserted at this news. The faith of Peter the Hermit himself failed. Convinced that the fury of the enemy would be peculiarly directed against him, he fled.

This unexpected desertion spread augmented terror and dismay over the crusaders. When they seemed on the point of despair, another priest, Peter Barthelemi, stopped their despondency and revived their spirits. He assured them, that Jesus Christ himself had revealed to him, that if the army would pass three days in fasting and prayer, they would immediately after find the identical spear with which his side had been pierced while he was on the cross. 'I leave you to judge,' said Barthelemi, 'how very easy a matter it will be for you to defeat the infidel army, when you have once got possession of that spear.'

The Christians having of late been accustomed to fasting as well as prayer, fulfilled the conditions; and Barthelemi, to their infinite satisfaction, found the spear.

The leaders having given time to the soldiers to refresh themselves, seized this period of renewed enthusiasm, and defeated the infidels. Antioch surrendered; and the road through Syria was open to the Christians.

By the retreat of the Turks, the city of Jerusalem had some time before this been recovered by the Soldan of Egypt, whose alliance the crusaders had hitherto courted. He sent an embassy to inform them, that provided they would come in a peaceable manner, and without their arms, they would be permitted to enter Jerusalem, and perform their religious vows. He farther promised, that all Christian pilgrims, who in future wished to visit the holy city, should be treated in the same hospitable manner that they had ever been by the Arabians, his predecessors.

How infinitely is it to be regretted that these offers were not accepted, which would have saved the memory of those zealots from the eternal reproach of a cruelty, surpassing, if possible, the original folly of their enterprize, and in direct contradiction to the precepts of the religion they professed!

After a siege of several weeks, they entered Jerusalem by assault, put all the garrison to the sword, slaughtered

the inhabitants without distinction of age or sex; and then, not only free from remorse, but exulting in what they had done, they proceeded, smeared with blood, to the holy sepulchre, singing anthems to Him who preached peace and good-will to man, and to that Being whose mercy is above all his works.

With some lucid intervals, this crusading madness lasted more than two centuries, during which time it has been computed that between five and six millions of men, in the different countries of Europe, assumed the cross. Such a long and extensive intercourse between the eastern and western world could not exist without having a considerable influence on the manners and sentiments of the inhabitants of both; but particularly of the latter, who passed through so many countries more fertile, better cultivated, and in a higher state of civilization than their own. Those who went by Constantinople had the opportunity of contemplating society in a vast and magnificent capital, and of viewing the refinements of a luxurious court; many of which, with some of the customs and notions prevalent among the Asiatics, they afterwards carried to their own countries. Among other importations, it was generally believed that a large cargo of the fictions of the Arabian imagination was brought to Europe by the crusaders, consisting of genii, enchanters, giants, golden palaces, amaranthine gardens, and all the splendid wonders of those romances which were read with eagerness in all the countries of Europe at this period.

The learned and ingenious Mr. Thomas Warton was of opinion, that those fictions were introduced at an earlier period by the Saracens or Arabians, who, after having been for some time established in Egypt and on the north coast of Africa, entered Spain about the beginning of the eighth century, and having conquered that country, their opinions, their customs, and their fables were diffused among the Spaniards, and spread to the other people of Europe.

Another learned and very ingenious critic * thinks that the ancient Scalds of the north believed in spells and enchantments, and also had some notion of the existence of giants and fairies previous to the period when the Saracens invaded Spain.

Mr. Warton is of opinion, that even if this could be proved, still the system of fairy mythology might be of Asiatic origin; because it is mentioned in some historical records, that a multitude of emigrants from Georgia, under the conduct of Odin, retreated, after the total overthrow of Mithridates, from the advancing legions of Rome, and established themselves in Denmark, Norway, and the other Scandinavian provinces which had been subjected to the Roman government. Of course this Odin or Wodin, who was afterwards worshipped as the god of the Scandinavians, may have introduced the Asiatic fictions into these northern regions at that time. In support of the historical authorities for the expedition of Odin, and for the introduction of the eastern customs and superstitions to the northern nations, Mr. Warton observes, that there is still a similarity between certain customs of the Georgians and those of particular cantons of Norway and Sweden. The ancient Danes and Norwegians inscribed the exploits of their heroes on rocks, which was also an Oriental custom. When a northern chief fell in battle, his armour, his war-horse, and his wife were consumed on the same funeral pile with his body. This horrible ceremony is at present observed in the east.

A correspondence is remarked between the druidical superstitions and those of the magi.

The Gothic hell resembles that of the Persians.

Lok, the evil spirit of the Goths, has a great likeness to the Arimanius of the Persians.

That blooming virgins shall administer luscious wine to the faithful, and fill the hearts of believers with de-

* Dr. Percy. See Essay on the Ancient Metrical Romances, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, vol. iii.

light in paradise, was no invention of Mahomet, but a favourite article of the creed of all the bordering nations, which he thought highly expedient to adopt in the Alcoran. In Odin's elysium, in like manner, the departed heroes received cups of the strongest mead and ale from the virgin goddesses called Valkyres.*

The learned Professor Mallet, of Geneva, in his Introduction to the History of Denmark, asserts, that even to the present age the people of that country are infatuated with a belief in the power of magicians, witches, gemii, and spirits, concealed under the earth or in the waters; which belief they derived from the fictions of the Scalds before the crusades, or the coming of the Arabians into Spain: but he thinks that some parts of their stories and romances are to be understood in a figuraitve sense.

'The Gothic castles,' says he, 'were rude fortresses situated on rocks, and rendered inaccessible by thick misshapen walls, which ran winding round the castle, and were called by a name which signifies serpents or dragons; and as they secured the women and young virgins of distinction, the ancient romancers, who knew not how to describe anything simply, took occasion from this, to assert, that the ladies of the castle were guarded by dragons.'

This interpretation seems much in the spirit of our countryman, John Bunyan, and certainly would not have been endured in the age when the romances were written. The same authority, which in this arbitrary manner changed dragons and serpents into stone-walls, might have converted the giants who guarded the castle into turrets, the dwarfs who sounded the alarm from the battlements into cocks crowing on the chimney-tops; and the whole spirit of the ancient romances, whether of Asiatic or Gothic extraction, would have been frozen into allegory.

Many who dispute whether the specious miracles of

* Warton's History of English Poetry.

fairy fiction are the progeny of the fertile imagination of Arabians, or of the gloomy fancy of northern bards, are agreed, that they were unknown to the ancient Greeks and Romans. There are critics, however, who have doubts on this point, and even insinuate that the first idea of knight-errantry belongs to the former; in support of which, they ask whether Hercules, Theseus, Jason, and others, were not men who freed their country from robbers, redressed wrongs, subdued oppressors, slew monsters, and relieved virgins. They ask if the Cyclops were not giants. They insist upon it that Circe was to all intents and purposes as complete an enchantress as either Alcina or Armida. They quote the eighth eclogue of Virgil and the exploits of the Mæris to prove that the ancients understood magic; and they think it clear, from Ovid's Metamorphosis, that the trick of changing human creatures into trees and animals of various kinds was known before the Arabian enchanters were heard of. And finally, they assert, that the Canidia of Horace was as genuine a witch as ever rode on a broomstick from Lapland, and probably a near relation of Shakespeare's witch, who sailed in a sieve to Aleppo.*

> Vidi egomet nigrâ succinctam vadere pallâ
> Canidiam, pedibus nudis, passoque capillo,
> Cum Saganâ majore ululantem. Pallor utrasque
> Fecerat horrendas aspectu. Scalpere terram
> Unguibus, et pullam divellere mordicus agnam
> Cœperunt. Cruor in fossam confusus, ut inde
> Manes elicerent, animas responsa daturas
> Lanea et effigies erat, altera cerea.†

On the whole, however, it must be allowed, that whatever sketches of magic may have been left by the Greeks and Romans, it afterwards received a fresh glow and more awful form from the splendour of Arabian colouring, and the gloomy sublime of the Gothic pencil.

It is justly remarked by the learned and elegant author of the Letters on Chivalry, that the imaginations of

* Macbeth, Act I. † Horace.

Shakespeare and Milton, fertile and sublime as they were, received assistance from Gothic ideas, in working up some of their most striking and most terrible descriptions.

That Wales should have been so constantly made the theatre of the old British chivalry, and that a prince of that country should have been one of the favourite heroes of ancient romance, Mr. Warton thinks was owing to the friendly connection that was established between Wales and the province of Armorica or Brittany. No district of France seemed more delighted with the fictions of the Arabians, which were soon blended into the native romances of that province; and many of those favourite fictions were engrafted on the tales and chronicles of the elder Welsh bards.

To account for the connection between Wales and Brittany, Mr. Warton adopts a story, not found in any of the Greek or Roman historians, but which he thinks sufficiently authenticated by the testimony of some old British writers, who assert, that as early as the fourth century, Maximus, a general of the Romans in Britain, having engaged an army of provincial Britons to support him, set up a separate interest against his countrymen: but not succeeding in his designs, he was obliged to retire, with his British adherents, to the neighbouring maritime country, with which they had long trafficked, and which had, like themselves, disclaimed the Roman yoke. The British emigrants, with their Roman chieftain, were received in the most hospitable manner; they were incorporated with the inhabitants; and in compliment to them the name of the province was changed from Armorica to Brittany. The most friendly intercourse subsisted for many centuries between the inhabitants of that corner of France and those of Wales and Cornwall; the two latter being generally united and auxiliaries to each other, first against the Romans, and afterwards against the Saxons.

On some pressing occasions the Welsh were reinforced by bands of their friends from Brittany. The leaders of

some of those bands are honourably mentioned in the songs of the bards: but the most distinguished champion against the Saxons was their own countryman, the famous Arthur prince of Silures, whose praise was resounded by every bard. Scarce a single castle, rock, river, or cavern in Wales remained undistinguished by some of his exploits.

Every song, narrative, or record, in praise of this hero, was carried from Wales to Brittany, believed with eager credulity and affectionate admiration by the Bretons, who were proud of being considered as the countrymen of so renowned a warrior. The collection was more carefully made and preserved in Brittany than in Wales, and, together with a chronicle in the Armoric or Welsh language, deducing Prince Arthur from Priam king of Troy, was brought to England about the year 1100 by Walter Mapes, archdeacon of Oxford, as he returned from the continent through Brittany.

A desire of being considered as the descendants of the Trojans had been manifested by different nations at various periods; yet if Homer's poem was to create an ambition to be thought the posterity of the warriors he celebrates, his partiality for his own countrymen, it might have been expected, would have made the choice in general fall on them. This is so far from being the case, that not only the other nations who wished for an illustrious origin, but even the Greeks themselves, in the reign of Justinian, were ambitious of being thought the descendants of the Trojans.

Mr. Thomas Warton, after mentioning this fact, observes, that 'unless we adopt the idea of those antiquarians, who contend that Europe was peopled from Phrygia, it will be hard to discover at what period, or from what source, so strange and improbable a notion could take its rise, especially among nations unacquainted with history, and overwhelmed in ignorance. The most rational mode of accounting for it, is to suppose, that the arrival of Virgil's Æneid about the sixth or seventh century, which re-

presented the Trojans as the founders of Rome, the capital of the supreme pontiff, and a city, on various other accounts, in the ages of Christianity, highly reverenced and distinguished, occasioned an emulation in many other European nations of claiming an alliance to the same respectable original.'

In addition to the ingenious reason assigned by Mr. Warton for the general preference given to the Trojans over the Greeks, it may be observed, that the venerable character of Priam, and the misfortunes of his family, the generous and humane disposition of Hector and Sarpedon, and the afflictions of Andromache, are more calculated to interest the heart and engage the affections than any thing recorded in the Iliad concerning the Grecian heroes.

In some of the colleges in this island it was usual, formerly, for the boys to engage in sportive battles, under the denomination of Greeks and Trojans; and I well remember that the partiality above mentioned, from whatever cause it arose, prevailed in favour of the latter; at least in that in which I was educated the general wish of the boys was to be considered as Trojans.

The compilation brought from Brittany, consisting of the fabulous chronicle of the kings, of traditions and historical songs, having been translated into Latin, and enlarged by Geoffrey of Monmouth, was from the Latin translated into French, under the title of *Brut d'Angleterre*, in the year 1115, and afterwards exhibited in English by Robert of Gloucester and Robert Manning, about the beginning of the fourteenth century. In this medley, full of anachronisms, Prince Arthur and his court, and the heroes of his round table, are described with a magnificence far beyond what could have been attained by a king of Wales, and with various customs of chivalry which were not adopted till long after the period in which Arthur lived. This prince is adorned with all the virtues that poets and monks can bestow upon the heroes they delight to honour. Yet surprising as his exploits and adventures

are represented to have been, they seem less surprising, and may be more easily accounted for than the means by which some of the enemies he is said to have encountered could have been collected together. He is represented as having defeated, in the same battle, a king of Spain, a king of Egypt, a king of the Medes, a king of Syria, a king of Babylon, and a duke of Phrygia. Arthur was not only an excellent general, but what some excellent generals are not, an exemplary Christian; and it was this part of his character that chiefly drew upon him the malice of so many Arabian magicians, with their heathen enchantments. But he had for his friend Merlin, a Christian enchanter, as far superior to the heathens of the same profession, as the serpent into which the rod of Moses was changed, was to those into which the rods of the Egyptian magicians were turned.

About the same time, or soon after this romance of Arthur, a fabulous history of Charlemagne appeared. Two expeditions in particular of this famous conqueror procured him the honour of being the hero of the work in question. After having defeated Vitiken, who had roused the Saxons to assert their liberties, and slaughtered four thousand five hundred prisoners, for permitting their general to make his escape, he constrained many of the remaining Saxons to affect a belief in Christianity, and to conform to the Christian ceremonies, by ordering that all who refused should be massacred. This he called converting them. He afterwards led his army to Spain, on purpose to convert, in the same manner, the Saracens who were in possession of that country. On his return through the Pyrenees, he was attacked by the enemy in the valley of Roncevaux. Many of his principal officers were slain, and particularly the celebrated Rolland. '*Ce malheur*,' says Voltaire, '*est l'origine de ces fables, qu'un moine écrivit au onzieme siècle, sous le nom de l'Archeveque Turpin, et qu'ensuite l'imagination de l'Arioste a embellies.*'*

* Voltaire has been accused of being inaccurate in his facts by some who never examined whether he was inaccurate or not, and who made the

This expedition against the infidel Saracens, joined to his zeal in converting the Saxons, more than all his other actions, determined this monk to choose Charlemgne for the hero of his romance, evidently composed in imitation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, and filled with fictions of the same extravagant nature.

Among a variety of facts, not only unsupported by, but inconsistent with, the records of credible history, this romance of Charlemagne mentions a pilgrimage of that monarch to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem; a circumstance calculated at once to interest the reader's affections in favour of the hero, and in favour of such absurd expeditions to Jerusalem. But no fancy in the whole book can appear more extravagant, to those who do not keep in mind the excessive credulity of the age in which it was written, than the author's imagining he could make it pass for true history; yet what else could be his reason for writing it in Latin, and ascribing it to a contemporary of Charlemagne, an archbishop, who might be supposed to have a complete knowledge of the facts, and whose religious and dignified character would give weight to what he related?

The Celtic and Latin were the two most common languages in Europe for the first eight centuries. The inhabitants of Provence formed a language composed of the two, which soon became more universal than any other, and was spoken by the nobility and higher orders of society in the greatest part of Europe. This early French was called Romane or Romance, on account of its affinity with Latin, and the books written in it were called Romances. It was divided into two dialects, both bearing the name of Romance. In the provinces of

the charge on no surer foundation than the principle which men, who have nothing but precision to boast of, are fond of propagating; namely, that men of genius and lively imagination are incapable of examining into the truth of facts, even when they write history. Dr. Robertson and Mr. Thomas Warton, two men of unquestionable genius, and distinguished for the accuracy of their inquiries, have given testimony in favour of the depth as well as accuracy of Voltaire's historical researches.

the south of France it obtained the name of Provençal Romane, because spoken by the subjects of the counts of Provence, known by the name of Provençals. In the northern provinces, a great number of Frankish words being adopted, it became the origin of the present French. And the Comte de Tressan asserts, that in Picardy the language of the common people, at this day, is much the same that was spoken in the twelfth century.*

It appears then that Prince Arthur and Charlemagne were the two original heroes of romance. The first may possibly have possessed as many heroic qualities as the second. As he fought in defence of his country only, he was probably a much more virtuous man. But the theatre on which Arthur acted was narrow in comparison with the magnificent and ample stage on which Charlemagne exhibited. Some of the early French and German writers complain of the insolence of Geoffrey in representing a prince of his own paltry island in as pompous a light as Archbishop Turpin had placed so great a monarch as Charlemagne. The truth is, both those heroes were obliged to the invention of romance writers for many of the exploits imputed to them: and Geoffrey's collection, with the fabulous history ascribed to Turpin, became the ground-work of innumerable romances, wonderfully adapted to the prevailing taste of the age in which they were written. They were filled with giants, monsters, dragons, and the machinery of Arabian or Scaldic necromancy, for the gratification of all lovers of the marvellous; with religious ceremonies and the miracles of saints, to please the superstitious; with ladies of peerless beauty, and knights of unshaken constancy, for the edification of the amorous; and they were occa-

* Quelque singulier qu'il soit que la langue romance du douze et du treizième siècle se soit conservée intacte en Picardie, le fait n'en est pas moins vrai, et tous les gens éclairés de cette province m'accorderont cette assertion.

Discours preliminaire. Traduction libre d'Amadis de Gaule.

sionally interspersed with combats and battles, which seem to have been mightily to the taste of the bulk of mankind in all ages. Those two works having been translated into the vulgar tongue of every nation in Europe, were read with extreme avidity by those who could read, and listened to with wondering attention by those who could not. They produced different effects on different dispositions and in different climates. That they should excite a general enthusiasm for arms and adventure, was to be expected: but that the martial gallantry they encouraged should, even in the most luxurious climate in Europe, be refined and sublimated into that enthusiastic species of love which was felt or affected by some of the Troubadours of Provence, was what could hardly have been imagined.

Those men were called Troubadours, or inventors, from their inventing poetical romances and songs, which an inferior class, called Jongleurs, sung to the harp at feasts and solemnities. They sung of war and battles; of the wonderful adventures of knights; of the beauty and virtues of damsels. As they adorned those damsels with every possible grace and accomplishment, the poet sometimes fell in love with the creature of his own imagination, and continued to make sonnets and love-songs on women who existed nowhere else; and if any of them afterwards met with a lady more interesting than usual, all the virtues and graces which he had collected in his sonnets, for the use of his ideal mistress, were applied to this real lady, whom perhaps he would continue to celebrate in his poems for years. Thus it often happened among the Troubadours, that instead of love making the poet, the poet made the love. Many have believed that this was the case with Petrarch.

But however that may be, the works of the Troubadours came every day more into vogue. The profession was highly respected; and the most distinguished of those who followed it were cherished in private society, and great favourites at the courts. They were even freed

from taxes. Some sovereign princes became so intoxicated with the works of the Troubadours, that they were vain of being inrolled in their number. The most eminent of these was Richard I of England. This prince had a passionate taste for poetry. He had composed some poetical romances, and was afterwards the subject of many; particularly of one, entitled, The Romance of Richard Cœur de Lion, which, with added fictions, celebrates his warlike exploits during his crusade. From this poem Mr. Thomas Warton gives several extracts. In that which describes the duel between Richard and the Soldan, at the siege of Babylon, it is said of the latter,

> A faucon brode in honde he bare
> For he thoght he wolde thare
> Have slayne Richarde with treasowne.*

The learned gentleman imagines, that by this faucon brode is meant a hawk; and that the Soldan is represented with this bird on his fist, to shew his indifference or contempt for the adversary with whom he was going to fight. Mr. Warton supports this conjecture by mentioning a curious Gothic picture, the subject of which is supposed to be this same duel; and some very old tapestry, on which heroes are represented on horseback with hawks on their fists. He adds, that in fedual times, no gentleman appeared on horseback but with a hawk so placed. But with all due respect to the authority of the picture and tapestry, and all possible deference to Mr. Warton's opinion, I cannot help thinking that the faucon brode signified a broad faulchion which the Soldan had in his hand, with which he certainly had a better chance of killing Richard than with a hawk on his fist, unless indeed the Soldan had reason to expect the same assistance from his hawk that Valerius Corvus received from the crow, in his duel with the Gaul.†

In the same poem we are informed that Richard car-

* History of English Poetry, p. 166.
† Vid. Tit. Livii Histor. lib. vii.

ried a battle-axe from England, that made him more than a match for the Soldan.

> King Richarde I understonde
> Or he went out of Engelonde
> Let him make an axe for the nones
> To brake therewith the Saracyns bones,
> The heed was wrought right well
> Therein was twenti bounde of stele.
> And when he come into Cypros londe
> The axe toke he in his honde
> All that he hytte he all to frapped
> The Gryffons away faste rapped.

But nothing in this poem can give a higher notion of the terror with which Richard's prowess had struck the infidels than what is recorded, in plain prose, by Joinville, that when the Saracens were riding, and their horses started at any unusual object, they said to their horses, spurring them at the same time, *Et cuides tu que ce soit le roy Richart?*

What contributed, as much as the favour of princes, to prompt young men to become Troubadours, was the great favour with which they were beheld by the ladies; many of whom were exceedingly solicitous to have those poets for their lovers, merely for the pleasure of being celebrated in their poems. That the avowed passion of a Troubadour, and his addressing love-sonnets to a lady, was not injurious to her reputation, or, at least, that many husbands were of this opinion, is evident, for the husbands in general were as vain of having a Troubadour attached to their ladies, as the ladies themselves could be. It is highly probable, therefore, that this species of attachment of a Troubadour to the married lady he chose for the theme of his poetry laid the foundation for the Cicisbeism of modern Italy.

The compositions of those Provençal poets were numerous, and some of them contained the best specimens of writing of the age; yet they would have perhaps for ever remained in the oblivion into which they had fallen, had it not been for M. de Sainte Palaye, of the Academy

of Inscriptions at Paris, by whom the literary history of the Troubadours was written.

A few manuscripts which he found in the library of the king of France, respecting this subject, seem to have excited his curiosity; and understanding that there were many more in Italy, he went to that country for the express purpose of examining them. Having obtained from the Pope free access to those manuscripts, he found the collection immense. In the abridgment that was made, some account of the lives of a considerable number of Troubadours is given, with as much of their compositions as was thought to contain any poetical merit, or tended to give an idea of the genius of the age in which they were written. Whatever seemed ridiculous or indecent was omitted. To too many of the originals the latter epithet was justly to be applied.

It is natural to imagine, that a more genuine notion of the customs, manners, and prevailing opinions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries will be gathered from the writings of men who mixed with the world, and visited different countries, than from the chronicles of monks, secluded from mankind, and whose minds were contracted by local and professional prejudices. The monkish chronicles treat only of public events, or of the pretended miracles of saints; the writings of the Troubadours give a view of domestic society. The works of poets often have this advantage over those of historians. In the compositions of the Troubadours, lively and even sublime images are to be found. They treat sometimes of warlike, at other times of religious subjects; and when the poem is intended to animate the prince and people to regain the sepulchre of Christ from the infidels, it is at once warlike and religious. Some of those compositions are boldly satirical on sovereign princes; and, what in that age required still more intrepidity, they even attack the vices of priests. Others are cruelly severe on the women: but in general they are full of the praises of the fair sex, and sometimes that praise swells to profanity.

It seems a little surprising, that the husbands in those days, and in a country so near to Spain, should have been so very much at their ease while those Troubadours, some of them in the flower of youth, and remarkably handsome, were singing love-songs to their wives. They were lulled into this security, perhaps, by the Platonic sentiments occasionally transfused into their verses; for the passion of several of the Troubadours seems to have been of so refined and spiritual a nature, that the husband might think he had as little to fear from them as from any singers whatever. The lover sometimes dwells with such persevering praise on the virtue of chastity, that however tender-hearted his mistress naturally might be, she must have thought herself obliged to continue cruel, on purpose to please him.

After declaring that the lady of his choice *inflames his heart* and transports his soul, one of those fervent lovers requests that she will permit him to *kiss her gloves;* and adds, that he never would presume to ask a higher mark of her favour.

In a poem of William of Montagnogout, addressed to his mistress, are the following sentiments.—

'That man cannot love, nor ought to be beloved, who asks of his mistress what virtue condemns. It is desire, not love, that seeks the dishonour of virtue. A loyal lover is never attached from passion, but from tenderness and reason. Never did I form a wish that could wound the heart of my beloved! No pleasure could be a delight to me that reflected on her delicacy.'

However excellent this doctrine is in itself, it seems extraordinary that it should have been inculcated by a set of men whose mistresses were generally other men's wives.

What is recorded of some of those Troubadours seems as extraordinary as the adventures of any of the heroes of romance. Of this the reader may judge, from a few examples which I shall abridge from their literary history.

Pons de Capdueil united the advantages of high birth, a fine figure, a great fortune, to that of a talent for poet-

ry. He fell in love with Azalais, the wife of a baron of Auvergne. He composed poems in praise of his mistress. They were sung at the feasts and tournaments exhibited at the baron's castle, to which all the neighbouring nobility were invited. The lady, on whose account those entertainments were made, was delighted, the husband satisfied, and the lover had all the enjoyment he seemed to wish, namely, the approbation and smiles of his mistress. But of a sudden this happy lover took a suspicion that all these fair appearances proceeded more from the lady's taste for praise, and feasts, and tournaments, than from her fondness for him. He wished, therefore, to have a more unequivocal proof of her passion. This is not surprising. But the proof which Pons de Capdueil languished for was not precisely what would have satisfied the greater part of lovers. To obtain the summit of his wishes, he withdrew to another province. He pretended to admire another lady, and composed sonnets in her praise. He was in hopes that, when Azalais heard of this, she would immediately manifest the deepest affliction. His supreme joy was to spring from her excessive sorrow. This was the unequivocal proof of her love his heart panted for. He had no wish beyond it. Capdueil did not obtain the fruition he expected. The baroness hearing she had a rival, gave orders that none should ever mention the name of Capdueil to her. If by accident it ever was mentioned, she kept a contemptuous silence. The capricious Troubadour, meanwhile, expected letters of recal, filled with amorous reproaches: but when he was informed by his friends that she never pronounced his name, and lived very cheerfully, he returned, dejected, to his native province, and wrote penitential letters to his mistress, informing her of the fond motive of his withdrawing, begging her forgiveness, and offering to submit to any punishment she thought proper to inflict. The lady was inexorable. She never deigned to answer his letters; nor would she listen to the mediation of those friends he commissioned to speak in his favour. In the

anger which this disappointment inspired him with, what did the enraged lover do? It might have been expected that he would have satirized all womankind. No; he wrote a libel against his mistress's looking-glass, which, by shewing her all her beauty, could alone, he thought, fill her mind with so much pride. The lady died soon after; and the lover lamented her death in an elegy, wherein he asserts, that the angels were at the same time singing her praises in paradise.

Capdueil now turned his mind from love to devotion, became a zealous preacher in favour of the holy war; and enforcing his exhortations by his example, he set out for Palestine, and died in the third crusade.

Geoffroi Rudel, prince of Blaye, was inspired with so desperate a passion for the countess of Tripoli, whom he had never beheld but in dreams, that he determined on making a voyage to her residence. When he was told that he would run a risk of being taken by the Saracens, he declared, that even in that event it would be a felicity for him to know that he was nearer the happy dwelling which she inhabited. He missed that felicity, however; and falling sick during the voyage, he landed at Tripoli in a dying condition, obtained a sight of his mistress, which, as it was the first, proved also the last. He literally expired at her feet.

Geoffroi Rudel seems to have entertained the same sentiment with Bertrand d'Alamanon, who, in one of his poems, declares, that although he has little or no hope of ever obtaining the favour of his mistress, yet that hope, small as it is, affords him more pleasure than the full possession of any other woman.

The amours of the Troubadour William Cuberstaign with Marguerita, wife of Count Raimond of Castel-Roussillon, were not of so refined a nature as those already quoted: but they were attended with very singular circumstances, and their catastrophe was dreadful.

William was a handsome man, as well as a poet. Marguerita was pleased with his person and delighted with

his verses. She made such advances as emboldened him to declare his passion for her. He expressed his love in such warm and unguarded terms in one poem, that the husband became jealous. As soon as William perceived it, he assured the count that he was desperately in love with Agnes, sister to Lady Marguerita, who was, he added, the real subject of the poem. The count communicated this information to the countess before her lover had an opportunity of explaining his reasons to her. She believed this false statement to be true, and overwhelmed him with the bitterest reproaches the next time they met. William endeavoured to justify himself, by acquainting her with the count's jealousy, and by assurances of his own continued love: but Marguerita could not bear that another should be thought the object of praises intended for her; and yielding to the suggestions of excessive vanity, she insisted that her lover should compose a new sonnet expressly in her praise. William, being as much intoxicated with love as Marguerita was with vanity, obeyed her commands.

In this composition the lady's beauty was so feelingly described, that the count's jealousy returned, and was augmented by the insinuations of the courtiers, who were envious of William's good fortune. Impelled by the fury of revenge, the count found means to draw William out of the castle; he then stabbed him, cut off his head, and tore out his heart. The latter he gave to the cook, to dress in the manner of venison. When this was served up at his table, he invited his wife to eat of it. As soon as she had complied,—

'Do you know,' said the monster, 'what you have been eating?'

'No,' she replied: 'but I find it delicious.'

'I believe it,' answered he. 'It is what you have long delighted in. Look,' continued he, uncovering the head of William, 'behold the head of him whose heart you have been eating.'

At this dreadful sight the countess fainted; and, when

she recovered, precipitated herself from a balcony, and was killed.

Shocked at such barbarity, the inhabitants of Roussillon and Narbonnois forgot all that was blameable in the conduct of William and Marguerita, and remembered only the cruelty of their fate. For many years after these transactions they assembled in great numbers at an anniversary instituted for the purpose of praying for the souls of those two unhappy lovers.

This is similar to the story of Raoul de Coucy and Gabrielle de Vergy, which, some years before the revolution, was made the subject of a tragedy on the French stage.

The amours of Guillaume de Balazun with Madame de Joviac were not attended with a scene quite so bloody. After this Troubadour had been for some time in possession of the lady's heart, one of his intimate friends, who had had a quarrel with his mistress, which was afterwards made up, assured him, that all the pleasure she had afforded him, previous to their quarrel, was not equal to that of their reconciliation. Balazun was instantly seized with the most singular caprice that ever caught the mind of a lover. He resolved to pick a quarrel with his own mistress, on purpose to enjoy this new pleasure. In consequence of which wise resolution, he refrained from visiting the lady; and when she sent a confidential friend to know what had offended him, and to offer all proper reparation in case she had unintentionally given him any cause of displeasure,—

'I will give no explanation,' said Balazun, 'because she cannot correct the fault she has committed, which is of a nature that I shall never forgive.'

The lady, exasperated at this conduct, determines to think no more of him. After some weeks absence, the lover hastens to the house of his mistress, that he may enjoy the supreme delight of reconciliation. He finds Madame de Joviac in no humour for indulging him. She orders him to be thrust out by her servants; and perse-

life; and there can be no doubt that this class of men, who, by some, have been called the fathers of modern learning, contributed not a little to soften the rough manners prevalent over Europe, and to the revival of a taste for letters.

The enthusiasm of the crusades, by breaking the barriers which separated nations, permitting rays from the most enlightened to extend to the most obscure, and opening a free communication of sentiment, tended also to the same object, and to the general improvement of the world.

In the early ages of the Roman republic, it was forbid by law to utter an indecent expression in the hearing of women. It was an established custom for the men to give place to them when they were met in the streets; and when they were called as witnesses to a court of justice, it was not lawful to touch their persons, although that was the usual form in summoning men. These and other marks of respect for the female sex continued, until the Roman manners became profligate and corrupt: but at no period was that degree of respectful attention to the sex shewn, either by the Greeks or Romans, which always prevailed among the Gothic nations. The institution of chivalry swelled this respect into an obsequiousness approaching to devotion.

All that ancient history records, bearing any resemblance to the gallantry of the knights-errant, and their devotion to the will of their mistresses, is the story of Antony and Cleopatra. The crusades engrafted Asiatic splendour on chivalry, and gave a magnificence to all the courts of Europe with which they were before unacquainted. The open communication with the East produced likewise an alteration in the structure and ornaments of the fables and romances which had formerly pleased the imagination of the public. Most of these, as was before observed, had been founded on the chronicles of King Arthur and the knights of the round table, or the romantic history of Charlemagne and his Twelve Peers: but after the expeditions to Palestine, new ideas

and fresh poetical ornaments enriched the compositions of the bards; new countries, new manners were described; more hyperbolical language, and a different species of supernatural machinery, was employed in the conduct of the romances.

The fertile and luxurious soil and climate of many parts of Asia invite to indolence, and indolence creates tedium. To prevent the continual intrusion of that yawning fiend into the seraglio of the sultan, his courtiers and mistresses were under the necessity of collecting or inventing narratives and stories for his amusement. Story-tellers were also sought for by the viziers and caliphs, equally at a loss how to fill up the long languid intervals of a life spent in indolence and sensuality. Whatever the rich have a great demand for, the poor will be eager to provide. Story-telling was cultivated as an art. The art could not be very difficult, where the audience were too proud to think they needed instruction, had no idea of wit or humour, and found entertainment from the recital of a succession of incidents, however improbable. Variety alone was necessary; and the story-tellers acquired, by practice, a wonderful facility in linking incidents, so as to excite curiosity.

It was a custom in Asia, from the earliest times, to celebrate the divinities and heroes in songs of triumph, immediately after victory. That this was an usage among the Jews, we have from the highest authority. It is known, from profane history, that this custom likewise prevailed among the Persians; and some of the magi were generally the composers of the triumphal hymns.

There is every reason to believe, that the commanders of the armies which opposed the crusaders had story-tellers to amuse them in the camp, and poets to celebrate their exploits. Whether the *Christian* chiefs borrowed the custom from the Asiatics, or found it originally in their own countries, it is certain that several of them were accompanied by Troubadours, whose chief employment, though they were also warriors, was of the

same nature with the poets of the Asiatics. None of the crusading leaders had so many in his retinue as Richard I of England. The enterprising genius and personal valour of that prince saved his poets the trouble of invention, and required the voice of truth alone to command admiration. He was not only a warrior and a patron of poetry, but a poet also; and would have been esteemed the most accomplished prince that ever wore the diadem of England, had he not sullied the lustre of his fine qualities by cruelty; a vice to which men of a poetical character are, in general, less prone than any of the human race.

After a captivity of fourteen months in Germany, on Richard's return to England, he invited many Troubadours to his court whom he had known in Palestine. Poets belonging to the court of such a warlike prince as Richard, and who were themselves warriors, would sing in different strains from the love-sick Troubadours who had remained in Provence. Their favourite theme was arms, and the heroes of the holy war; and their poetical romances would naturally be embellished with Oriental ornament. These performances were profusely circulated over England, and co-operated with the sermons of the monks, all over Europe, to keep alive the crusading spirit. Nothing can be a stronger proof of the extent of that enthusiasm, than that two such wise and politic princes as Louis IX of France and Edward I of England were infected with it. The first died at Tunis of the fatigues he had undergone in one of those ridiculous expeditions; and, after a reign of benevolence, he obtained the title of Saint for that part of his life which least merited it. The second, unshaken by the misfortunes of his predecessor Richard, or the fate of his friend Louis, persisted in a resolution he had formed while he was only Prince of England: and soon after the victory of Evesham, when the kingdom was still in an unsettled state, and his father far advanced in years, he actually set out for Palestine. Emulous of the reputation which

Richard had formerly acquired in that country, he revived the military fame of England, and by his heroic exploits struck the Saracens with such terror, that they hired an assassin to murder him. Without accomplishing his purpose, the wretch perished in the attempt.

Criminal as this intended assassination must ever be deemed, as it was directed against an enemy, and the invader of their country, it does not seem so deeply wicked as the conduct of four Christian princes towards one of the most distinguished heroes of the Cross. Henry emperor of Germany, Philip king of France, and his holiness the Pope, all abetted the perfidy of Leopold duke of Austria in detaining in prison Richard of England.

This plainly proves, that all the religious zeal that blazed forth in the days of the crusades had little effect in correcting the interested policy which seems to have been the prevailing principle of princes in every age.

An adventure which happened to Edward I of England, on his return from Palestine, equally proves that the institution of chivalry, however generous and noble its injunctions were, was unable to subdue the barbarous spirit of that age, even in the most polished country of Christendom. As Edward returned through Burgundy, he was invited by the prince of that country to a tournament then preparing. Having accepted his invitation, Edward and his retinue displayed great superiority in the jousts and martial exercises on that occasion, which stung the French knights with such rage and jealousy, that they made an attack on the English knights, with the perfidious intention of destroying them. They were baffled, however, and repulsed with considerable bloodshed.

It appears equally extraordinary, that one who was neither a Christian nor a knight-errant, should have possessed more of the benevolent spirit of Christianity, and the heroic generosity enforced by the laws of chivalry, than any of the Christian knights who fought for the recovery of Jerusalem; yet history informs us, that the in-

fidel emperor Saladin manifested a conduct equal in valour, and more distinguished for generosity, justice, and humanity, than any hero of the crusades.

Dr. Smollett was so much displeased at the fancy of certain authors of his days, in tracing the customs and manners of modern times from the feudal system, that he declares he expected to *see the use of trunk hose and buttered ale ascribed to that institution.*[*]

But without carrying that idea to a ridiculous length, it seems clear that the feudal institutions, by raising the principal officers of the Gothic armies into petty sovereigns, who soon assumed the right of supporting their claims by force, and redressing their own wrongs, produced those quarrels, fights, robberies, rapes, violations of all kinds, which gave rise to the associations for the protection of the weak and unarmed in general, and for that of woman in particular, which laid the first foundation of chivalry.

The immediate benefit reaped by society, in times when law was so inefficacious, rendered that institution popular. This popularity was greatly augmented, when the praises of those who adopted it were resounded in songs, and spread in written narratives all over the country; and the spirit of chivalry arose to enthusiasm when a new field of adventure was opened to the knights by the crusades, a new source of ideas to the romancers, and new flights of imagination attempted by the poets.

Religious sentiments are natural to man; a love of the wonderful seems also natural; and love of the fair sex is the most natural of all. The early romances possessed all those various powers of interesting the human feelings and passions. They were filled with the exploits of Christian knights, who asserted the truth of the Catholic faith in the regions of infidelity, defeated whole armies of Pagans, saved virgins from violation, and relieved captives from enchanted castles, in spite of the giants, dragons, and monsters that guarded them. The best of

[*] Humphry Clinker, vol. iii.

these, however, were written in the French language. Even the English romance writers preferred it to their own, because it was the most universal, and would procure them the greatest number of readers of rank and distinction. The use of the French language, in law proceedings, was not abolished in England until the reign of Edward III, whose wars with France gave the English an antipathy to that nation, which seems never to have been felt with equal inveteracy by the French. A philosophical and candid historian endeavours to account for this. He observes, 'that France lies in the middle of Europe; has been successively engaged in hostilities with all its neighbours; the popular prejudices have been diverted into many channels; and with a people of softer manners, they never rose to a great height against any particular nation.' Whereas England was, for a long series of years, engaged in hostilities with no nation but the French and Scotch; and their prejudices, according to Hume's idea, must of course have been chiefly directed against those two nations. But before the source of this prejudice sprung up, it is natural to think that the nobility, at least of England, had a partiality for the French. Mr. Thomas Warton observes, that the court of England, for more than two hundred years after the conquest, was totally French.*

Nothing but the long and bloody wars which afterwards arose between England and France could have converted that partiality into hatred.

As a proof of the estimation in which French romances were held at the English court, it is recorded, that in the revenue-roll of the 21st year of the reign of Henry III, there is an entry of silver clasps and studs for his majesty's great book of romances. Most of those originally written in French were soon translated into English, and eagerly read by all the natives of England who did not understand French, and who could read English.

As the institution of chivalry furnished materials for

* History of English Poetry, vol. i, p. 86.

romance, the romance writers repaid the obligation by giving celebrity to that institution, and augmenting the spirit of knight-errantry all over Europe.

It would have been fortunate if those writings had roused and kept alive the martial spirit only when its exertions were necessary: but they contributed, in this island particularly, to promote civil feuds, and to excite frequent combats between the chieftains of the borders of Scotland and England, even when the two nations were at peace.

The continual wars in which Edward III of England was engaged, and the enthusiastic admiration of chivalry which he manifested during the whole course of his reign, was probably, in some measure, owing to his having studied the clasped book in his great-grandfather's library.

The influence of the old romances, in promoting the spirit of chivalry, seems to have been strongly felt, about the same period, in Scotland.

When the victorious Bruce had recovered the independence of his country, secured peace with England by the marriage of his son David with the sister of Edward III, and, by his genius and authority, maintained union among his own unruly barons, many of them found this interval of tranquillity insupportable. They wandered, like knights-errant, over Europe, in search of war and adventures. Hunting, which was the chief occupation and amusement of men of rank in those days, seemed as insipid to them, after having been habituated to the alarms and agitations of war, as a small stake is to men accustomed to deep gaming. The Douglasses and the Percies, therefore, to render their hunting parties more interesting, enlivened them sometimes with a battle.

That Douglas, who had accompanied Bruce in all his dangers, endeavoured to crown his former exploits by one of the most daring attempts that can be imagined. Having led a Scottish army into England, he was intercepted by Edward, at Stanhope-park. The Scottish army being inferior in numbers, were obliged to take a strong posi-

tion, with the river Were between them and the English. While Edward was making preparations to attack them, Douglas, having gotten the word, entered the English camp in the night with two hundred men, and assuming the deportment of an officer going the rounds, he called out, 'St. George! is there no watch here?' Thus deceiving the sentinels, he passed on to the king's tent, and had well nigh carried off the monarch in the midst of his army. This was prevented by Edward's attendants awaking, giving the alarm, making a noble resistance, and by his chaplain and chamberlain sacrificing their lives for his safety. Douglas, disappointed of his object, made a hasty retreat to his army, which soon after repassed the Were, and arrived, without being overtaken by the English, in their own country.

Peace was concluded between England and Scotland the year following. As a marriage took place, about the same time, between David, the son of Bruce, and Johanna, the sister of Edward, hopes were entertained that this peace would be more durable than it proved. Though greatly for the interest of both nations, the peace was censured. In that age, those who were most averse from pacific measures were often the very men who would have incurred all the toils and dangers of war. At present it is different. The promoters of war are in general men who are exempted from its dangers, and indemnified, by their offices, for its expenses.

The year after his son's marriage the king of Scotland died. All the wisdom of this great prince did not keep his mind free from the enthusiasm of the age in which he lived. He had resolved upon an expedition into Palestine. He hoped to complete his military glory, and to expiate all his offences, by serving against the Saracens: but feeling that his plan would be prevented by approaching death, he requested his friend and companion in arms, Douglas, to carry his heart to Jerusalem, and to deposit it in the sepulchre of our Lord.

When this warrior, with a numerous retinue,* was on his way to Palestine, in consequence of this last request of his sovereign, he learnt that Alphonsus, king of Castile, was then waging war against the Moors in Granada. As the Moors were enemies to the Christian faith, this was considered as a holy war. It appeared, therefore, to Douglas and his attendants, that to visit Spain, and assist Alphonsus against the infidels, accorded perfectly with the object of their journey to Jerusalem. They went to Spain accordingly, and were honourably entertained by the king of Castile. In a battle fought between the Spaniards and Moors, on the frontiers of Andalusia, Douglas, taking the casket which contained the heart of Bruce, threw it before him, saying, 'Pass thou onward, as thou was wont, and Douglas will follow thee, or die.' He was, however, overwhelmed by numbers, and fell. The few of his attendants who survived their leader found his body, which, together with the casket, they conveyed to Scotland. The remains of the warrior were interred in the church of Douglas. The heart of the king was deposited at Melrose.

The writers of those times had surely little occasion to tax their invention for the entertainment of their readers, when genuine narratives of the lives of their cotemporaries might have been embellished with such adventures as this.

The real incidents that were daily occurring, joined to the influence of romance writing, roused the military spirit to such a height, that at length it caught the female

* Froissart says, tom. i, c. 21, Douglas had in his train a knight bearing a banner, (probably Sir William St. Clair of Roslin), and seven other knights, and twenty esquires, all comely young men of good family, besides many attendants of inferior rank. He kept open table, with trumpets and timbals, as if he had been king of Scotland, and was served in gold and silver plate. All persons of condition, who visited him on shipboard, were well entertained. Froissart adds, *Et sachez que tous ceux qui le vouloyent aller veoir, estoient bien servis de deux manières de vins et de deux manières d'espices.*

Sir David Dalrymple's *Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 134.

sex, and shone conspicuous in Jane of Flanders, countess of Mountfort; in the duchess of Brittany, wife of Charles of Blois; in Philippa queen of England; all of whom flourished in the time of Edward III, as did the famous Maid of Orleans, at no very distant period after his death. The intrepid conduct and magnanimity of those heroines of history equals what is recorded of the heroines of fable, and obliges us to acknowledge that the Marphisa of Ariosto, and the Clorinda of Tasso, are characters within the limits of nature.

A great historian, when treating of the reign of Edward III, observes, that if any thing could justify the obsequious devotion, then professed to the fair sex, it would be the appearance of such extraordinary women as shone forth about that period.

After Edward III had built the castle of Windsor, he formed a fraternity of 24 knights, for whom he erected a round table, in a round chamber appropriated entirely to their use. It is impossible to avoid believing that Edward caught this idea from the old romance of King Arthur.

The Order of the Garter, founded by Edward at Windsor, during the ceremonies of a festival which lasted fifteen days, is also an indication of the romantic turn of this monarch's mind. The story of the countess of Salisbury's garter, as the origin of this institution, is exploded by some, because it is not supported by any ancient testimony: yet nothing can be more in the spirit of that knight-errantry which Edward affected, than to give a high importance to the most trivial incident connected with a woman he loved, while at the same time he shewed a delicacy respecting her reputation. Besides, how can a motto and badge, apparently so unmeaning as those of the garter, be otherwise accounted for?

Although this monarch, as well as his gallant son the prince of Wales, were fond of splendour, and all the pomp of war, their ambition did not stop there. They were the foremost in the field of danger as well as in the solemnities of a festival.

The ideas of magnificence brought from the East, intermingled with those of chivalry by the writers of romance, joined to the increasing wealth of England during the reign of Edward III, introduced a fantastic species of splendour and knight-errantry unknown before in that country. We are told that 'the tournaments were constantly crowded with ladies of the first distinction, who attended them on horseback, armed with daggers, and dressed in a succinct soldier-like habit or uniform, prepared for the purpose. In a tournament exhibited in London, sixty ladies on palfries appeared, each leading a knight with a gold chain.'*

The greatest venerators of antiquity, those who are most inclined, in other instances, to prefer the customs of our ancestors, will acknowledge that the present mode, which exacts that ladies shall wear no daggers but those in their eyes, and lead their lovers by no golden chains but those of their dowry, is an improvement of the ancient fashion.

It must also be confessed, that the *practices* of the knights, even during the reign of chivalry, was inconsistent, in many memorable instances, with the strict good faith they professed.

In the reign of Richard II of England, when the duke of Hereford, (afterwards Henry IV), accused the duke of Norfolk, in parliament, of having slandered the king; the accusation, supposing it well founded, was made by a breach of private confidence, to the ruin of a person who had trusted him. And the duke of Norfolk had formerly betrayed an equal insensibility to honour: for although he had joined the duke of Gloucester in many acts of violence against the king, he afterwards impeached his associates for the very crimes he had concurred with them in committing.

The ill-fated Richard had much reason to repent having prevented the combat between these two men, after the lists had been appointed at Coventry. His interposi-

* Vide Warton's History of English Poetry.

tion, however, forms a presumption in favour of the disposition of this unhappy prince, especially as the combat, on which the life as well as the honour of the combatants depended, would have been more agreeable to the courtiers than the bloodless tournaments to which they had been accustomed. But the strongest proof, that sentiments of honour and regard to justice, when opposed to any real or supposed interest, had as little, or less influence, if possible, on the minds of princes in those days than now, is the deplorable fate of the Maid of Orleans, whose sex, heroic exploits, and situation as a prisoner of war, gave her the strongest claims to generous treatment. Yet all those titles did not preserve her from an unjust sentence and cruel death, for which, if prompted by superstition, the judges deserve contempt, and if by revenge, universal detestation.

The festivals, tournaments, and processions, so much in fashion in those days, however cumbersome to the actors, were in all probability less fatiguing to the spectators than the dramatic entertainments called Miracles, or Holy Plays, which succeeded them. The subjects of the latter were taken from the Bible, or the legends of the saints; the exhibition consisted of the miracles and resurrection of Christ, the sufferings of the martyrs, the massacre of the innocents, the descent of the Holy Ghost, or the creation of the world. How they contrived to represent the last, it is difficult to conceive; but we are assured, of what seems as difficult to believe, that in one play Adam and Eve were exhibited on the stage in a state of innocence, quite naked, and *not ashamed;* and, what seems equally incredible, that this spectacle was beheld by a numerous assembly of both sexes with *great composure.** While they are in this condition, the old serpent comes on the stage lamenting his fall, and, having conversed a little with Adam and Eve, *exit* hissing. If such an exhibition were attempted at present in England, the audience would certainly join with the serpent: but after what late-

* Warton's History of English Poetry, vol. i, p. 243.

ly passed at a public walk at Paris, there is no knowing how it would be received in France.*

Religious plays continued to be acted in churches and chapels till the reign of Henry VIII, when they went out of fashion, and were succeeded by masques, and represented in more suitable theatres. In those masques, people of the first rank were sometimes the actors.

That the plots of the earliest plays were not taken from profane history, or the romances of chivalry, was owing, it is probable, to the circumstance of their being exhibited in churches, where no entertainment drawn from such sources would have been admitted. The masques, which were acted at court or at the castles of the nobility, were generally founded on historical incidents or fabulous stories.

But, previous to the introduction of those masques, an improvement had taken place in the taste of the public, which was in a great measure effected by the writings of Chaucer, the most distinguished literary character that England had hitherto produced. Chaucer enjoyed many advantages over any former English writer: to a literary education he joined a knowledge of the world, improved by travelling, and a turn for observation. He possessed a lively imagination and great power of description. He made his countrymen acquainted with the Italian wits, whose writings he embellished while he translated; a favour which Dryden and Pope have since returned with interest, by the admirable manner in which they have paraphrased and rendered some of the works of Chaucer into modern English.

The poem of Palemon and Arcite affords very striking proofs, not only of Chaucer's talent for delineating the beauties of nature, but also of his pathetic powers; at the same time it exibits that strange jumble of manners, of opinions, and of extravagant incidents, which are to be

* It was mentioned in all the Parisian journals, that a lady had walked in the Elysian fields, when crowded with company, dressed in a gauze robe only, through which all her beauties were pretty distinctly seen.

found in all the romances of the age in which the story of Palemon and Arcite was invented.

The poetical talents and taste of Chaucer were no doubt improved by the works of the Italian and French men of genius. Danté flourished a little before his time; but Chaucer, when on the continent, had the advantage of being personally acquainted with both Petrarch and Boccacio. The latter is said to have admired the works of the former excessively, and to have called him his master: he may have admired him, but he certainly did not attempt to imitate him. Nothing can be more distant from the metaphysical and Platonic sonnets of Petrarch than the tales of Boccacio. Chaucer has not always kept the just medium between the two, but has sometimes deviated into the favourite path of Boccacio. Whether a greater purity of morals exists in the present age than in the days of Chaucer, some people doubt; but that the same licentiousness which was allowed in the press and on the stage then, would meet with public marks of disapprobation now, cannot be disputed.

The Decameron of Boccacio is a work that approaches more to the modern romance or novel than any that had before appeared. Chaucer's imitation of that work, in his Canterbury Tales, gave him an opportunity of displaying that knowledge of life and manners, that talent for ridicule, and that power of sketching directly from nature, in which, perhaps, his greatest strength lay. Yet, in these, neither Boccacio nor he were imitated by succeeding writers. The fables of the Arabians and Gothic chivalry were still more agreeable to the taste of the public, and certainly made a deeper impression on the imagination of the prose writers, as well as the poets. This appeared by the eagerness with which Amadis de Gaul, and other romances of inferior note, were read all over Europe, by the works of Ariosto and Tasso, who embellished the Gothic and Arabian extravagancies with all the magic of poetry: and the same is evident from the works of Spencer and Milton, the last of whom, though he

wrote in a much later age, evidently shewed that he had a predilection for *forests and enchantments drear*, and preferred *the story of Cambuscan bold* to Chaucer's works of humour, and his power of delineating characters from real life.

That there is somewhat peculiarly captivating to a poetical mind in those fables, is confirmed by Dr. Johnson, who, in his life of Collins, informs us, that 'he (Collins) had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction and subjects of fancy; and, by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens.'

It will be observed, that frequent mention is made of the poets. In an inquiry into the origin and progress of romance this cannot be avoided. The romance-writer borrowed so frequently from the poet, and the poet from the romance-writer, that it is difficult to decide which was the original creditor: and many wrote metrical romances, and combined both characters.

One cause of Boccacio's and Chaucer's not being immediately imitated in describing domestic life, and the real manners of the age in which they lived, might be the great uniformity and simplicity of the manners which existed in those days; that infinite number of affectations, that vast variety of shades of ridicule, those despicable vanities, and childish caprices, the offspring of spreading wealth and increasing luxury, which have afforded such abundant game to the comic writers of the present century, were not known formerly; but the chief reason certainly was, the decided partiality which the public retained for the Gothic and Arabian entertainments on which they had so long feasted, and which still warmed

the imaginations of some sublime poets who adorned Italy and England a considerable time after the death of Chaucer, and who still thought the manners of romance, though in a great measure exploded in the age in which they themselves lived, more favourable to the purposes of poetry than even the fictions of classical antiquity.

Most of the prose romances, which appeared in England from the days of Chaucer to those of James I, were translations from the Spanish or French.

The Pentagruel of Rabelais can hardly be classed among romances; it is of a nature so peculiar and extravagant, that it must stand by itself. In many parts it is unintelligible; but the author's chief intention seems to have been satire, particularly against the monks. The work has been much esteemed by some men of genius: it is unquestionably written with gaiety and wit, which, however, are not sufficient to compensate for its obscenity and grossness.

Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia was among the first English performances of that class, and by far the best published in that period. It is a kind of pastoral romance, intermingled with adventures of chivalry. His defence of poetry, and some of his other writings, are still more esteemed: but the reputation of this gallant nobleman has a more lasting and honourable foundation, in his heroic and amiable character, than in his writings.

Parthenissa, a romance, by the earl of Orrery, in three volumes in folio, was published in the year 1664. Mr. Walpole informs us, that the earl's biographer acknowledges that the performance was not much read. This will not seem very extraordinary; but the biographer's manner of accounting for it is what few people could have imagined; it was entirely owing, he says, to the work never having been completed.

In France, Calprenede, and afterwards Madame Scudery, introduced a new species of romance, in which the heroes of true history are the achievers of fictitious adventures. In these performances, although the

adventures are in themselves somewhat more probable than those of the ancient knights-errant, all credibility is precluded from the mind of a well-informed reader by his knowledge of history; and in that of a reader uninstructed, truth is so entangled with fiction, that it may be very difficult afterwards to separate them.

Calprenede's principal works were Cassandra, Cleopatra, and Pharamond, each a romance of ten or twelve octavo volumes! He was gentleman of the bedchamber to Louis XIII. His works, it is said, were eagerly read by the courtiers, and proved a great relaxation to them during their attendance at court. Those who have attempted the oppressive task of reading a few pages of his romances, must have a strong impression of the insipidity and wearisomeness of that kind of life to which such reading could afford relief.

The writings of Madame Scudery were thought more entertaining, and were admired by many distinguished persons in the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV, although Boileau calls them *une boutique de verbiage.*

She wrote a romance entitled Clelia, in ten volumes octavo, the Great Cyrus, and several other romances of the same size, besides a number of other literary compositions, of such length as must naturally raise surprise at the comparative shortness of her life, for she died at the age of ninety-four.

Madam Scudery was remarkably ugly. The following lines written by her, and addressed to a painter who had drawn her portrait, give a stronger proof of her wit and good-humour than is to be found in her works.—

> Nanteuil, en faisant mon image,
> A de son art divin signalé le pouvoir;
> Je hais mes traits dans mon miroir,
> Je les aime dans son ouvrage.

The profession of chivalry was more universally exercised, and continued longer, in Spain, than in any other country of Europe. This was probably owing to the long wars between the Spaniards and the Moors, and to the

siege of Granada, before whose walls the youth of both nations often fought in detatched combats. After knight-errantry was proscribed by law, or considered as ridiculous, in various other nations, and the actual exercise of it existed no longer in Spain itself, still that country overflowed with books of chivalry, which were passionately read, filling the heads of numbers with the absurd ideas of enchantments, magicians, invincible knights, and peerless virgins; perverting the taste of the readers, giving them false notions of historical facts, rendering them unfit for their necessary occupations, and disgusting them with domestic life.

In this state the immortal Cervantes, by the magic of his wit, banished all other magicians. By the exquisite exhibition of one madman, of his own creation, he cured his countrymen of one species of epidemic madness; for the renowned Don Quixote drove knights-errant, giants, dwarfs, dragons, and their historians, entirely out of Spain.

But while Cervantes placed the absurdities of the old romance in the most striking point of view, he gave, in the same work, the most convincing proof that the passions could be affected, the understanding instructed, mirth excited, and all the purposes of writing attained, by representations of real domestic life, without offending the modesty of nature.

There was no such thing in Europe as knight-errantry in the days of Cervantes; his aim, therefore, in writing Don Quixote, could not be what some have supposed, to abolish a profession that no longer existed, but to turn into ridicule the prevailing taste of his countrymen for writings filled with marvellous and unnatural adventures that never had existed but in books of chivalry. In the execution of this he gives a view of the real state of manners in Spain, intermixed with scenes of exquisite humour, and many admirable observations of a moral tendency.

The testimony of so judicious a critic as the late Dr. Johnson, as recorded in Mrs. Piozzi's very entertaining Anecdotes, must be agreeable to every admirer of Cer-

vantes. 'After Homer's Iliad, Mr. Johnson confessed that the work of Cervantes was the greatest in the world; speaking of it as a book of entertainment.'

That ingenious lady adds, 'When we consider, that every other author's admirers are confined to his countrymen, and perhaps to the literary classes among *them*, while Don Quixote is a sort of common property, an universal classic, equally tasted by the court and the cottage, equally applauded in France and England as in Spain, quoted by every servant, the amusement of every age, from infancy to decrepitude; the first book you see on every shelf in every shop where books are sold: who can refuse his consent to an avowal of the superiority of Cervantes to all other modern writers?'

Whether this high praise is allowed, in all its latitude, to the author of Don Quixote or not, as he leads the reader through all the scenes of domestic life, and gives a true picture of life and manners in Spain, at the time he wrote, he became the model of that species of romance which has been since adopted by Le Sage, Marivaux, Rosseau, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and so many others.

It will seem strange that no Spanish writer appears in this list. Cervantes, it is true, had overthrown one species of absurdity which perverted the understanding of his countrymen; but another remained; the terrifying demon of superstition, whose baleful influence is of itself sufficient to depress the heart, derange the mind, check and shrivel all the blossoms of imagination, and proves more hostile to genius than despotism itself; because civil tyranny only makes men afraid of *acting* or speaking with freedom, but superstition renders them fearful of even *thinking*.

Le Sage proves himself to have been intimately acquainted with human nature. The character of Gil Blas he certainly never intended as a model of imitation. His object seems to have been to exhibit men as they are, not as they ought to be; for this purpose he chooses a youth of no extraordinary talents, and without steady principles,

open to be duped by knavery, and perverted by example. He sends him, like a spaniel, through the open fields, the coverts, the giddy heights, and latent tracts of life, to raise the game at which he wishes to shoot; and few moral huntsmen ever afforded more entertaining sport.

Le Sage has chosen Spain as the scene of the adventures he describes in his various works. He was probably induced to this from a desire to preclude the personal applications of his characters. He had lived many years in Spain, and was acquainted with the manners of that country: but while he leads us through Spain, and keeps us continually in the company of people with Spanish names, it is not difficult to perceive that our conductor is a Frenchman.

A more direct and minute copy of French manners is given in the Paysan Parvenu and in the Marianne of Marivaux. If he be thought to dwell with too much refinement on the secret motives of conduct, and all the movements of the passions, it must at the same time be admitted, that he repays the reader's attention by the wit and pleasantry of his narrative, and by the fidelity with which he copied from nature.

The Eloisa of Rousseau, in point of eloquence, surpasses any romance, perhaps any book, in the French language. No writer ever presented the objects he described more distinctly before the eyes of the reader. With what a glowing pen does he trace the emotion of the passions! To give examples would be to quote great part of the book. I shall mention one, the behaviour of Julia on a most interesting occasion, and the eloquent simplicity of the single sentence she pronounced, implying all that could have been conveyed in a long and impressive harangue. It is in that letter to Lord Edward, where St. Preux describes what passed when he accompanied Julia, then the wife of Wolmar, across the lake to Meillerie, and to the very spot where he had formerly passed whole days, with his eyes fixed on her habitation, and from whence, surrounded with snow and ice, he had written that ardent

letter that prevailed on her to recal him, at every risk. Having pointed out her name engraven on the rocks, and reminded her of a thousand tender circumstances regarding their loves, he concludes a most impassioned address in these words.—' *O toi pour qui j'etois né! Faut il me retrouver avec toi dans les mêmes lieux, et regretter le tems que j'y passois à gemir de ton absence?*'

He was about to continue, when Julia, seeing him move towards the precipice, was frightened, seized him by the hand, which she squeezed, while she looked at him with tenderness, endeavouring to suppress a sigh, and then turning her face from him, and drawing him by the arm, she said with emotion, ' *Allons-nous-en, mon ami, l'air de ce lieu n'est pas bon pour moi.*'

When they had descended from the mountain, and were seated in the boat, the account of what passed in his mind,—' *la voir, la toucher, lui parler, l'aimer, l'adorer, et, presque en la possedant encore, la sentir, perdue à jamais pour moi*'—all this prepares us for the dreadful temptation that his despair suggested of throwing himself with her into the lake, and expiring in her arms.

Another striking proof of Rousseau's superior talents appears in St. Preux's dream, towards the end of the work—Julia attending her mother on her deathbed—the disappearance of the mother, and Julia occupying her place—the veil that covered her face, and which all St. Preux's efforts could not remove—the impression this dream made on his mind—his being carried back by Lord Edward, on purpose that he might see her once more, and remove the impression made by the dream—his going away again without seeing her—the death of Julia—Clara's recollection of the dream, which produces its accomplishment: the whole of this is so like the wildness of a dream, yet so true to nature, and so admirably described, that it displays at once the inventive genius, the accurate observation, and the powerful eloquence of this author.

Rousseau had frankly and foolishly perhaps told Vol-

taire, that although he admired his genius, he did not love him as a man. Voltaire, of course, hated Rousseau, and endeavoured to turn the Eloisa and its author into ridicule. What has not Voltaire endeavoured to turn into ridicule? The same person who laughed at the prophecies in the Bible, by a pretended prophecy, sneers at the eloquent performance of Rousseau. 'It is,' says he, 'full of poison, which will act upon the heart as well as the understanding of the young female reader. The author offers also an antidote for his poison, which can act on the understanding only. Besides, the antidote is in the preface, and young women never read prefaces. In excuse for writing a book which inspires vice, the author declares, that in the age in which he lived it was impossible to be virtuous.'

But in this prophecy, as in other parts of Voltaire's works, there is infinitely more wit than truth; and the accusation of writing what may inspire impiety, and irreverent ideas of Providence, comes with no great propriety from the author of Candide. Has the Eloisa of Rousseau a tendency to inspire vice? Is it likely that any young woman will be allured from virtue by the example of one who was the victim of unceasing remorse, because she had deviated from its paths in one instance; who afterwards, in the midst of opportunity and temptation, adheres with fidelity to the marriage vow, and whose present comforts and hopes of future happiness are derived from that reflection?

From the representation of one particular character in this work, an inference might be made which certainly did not occur to the author. Wolmar is described, not only as the most benevolent of mankind, but as a person of the coolest judgment and the clearest understanding. Every body has failings, and commits mistakes, except Wolmar; and Wolmar is an atheist.

That the inference which might be drawn from this circumstance escaped Rousseau, is evident from the ge-

neral tenor of all his works, which evince the firmest conviction of the existence of a Supreme Being.

Richardson introduced a new species of romance, wherein the persons concerned are supposed to be the relaters of what passes; and the sentiments are expressed as they arise on the first impression, and while the relater is still ignorant of the events that are to follow.

This method certainly has the advantage of affording the author the oppportunity of varying his style, by adapting it to the characters of the different persons he introduces; an advantage of which Richardson avails himself very successfully; which was by no means the case with Rousseau; for although his Eloisa is written in letters, in imitation of Clarissa, he has failed in adapting the style of the letters to the characters of the supposed writers, in the same happy manner that is executed by Richardson. Through the whole of the new Eloisa, whether Julia, St. Preux, Clara, or any other name be attached to the letter, you always perceive that Jean Jacques is the real writer.

This manner of giving the whole story by letters is liable to the inconveniencies of producing repetitions, and of drawing out the story to a tiresome length; which inconveniencies Richardson has not always had the address to avoid. His favourite character of Grandison is much too formal to be a favourite with the women in general; and there is somewhat of prudery in his heroines that prevents them from being favourites with the men: but he describes the operation of the passions with a truth and minuteness that evinces a great knowledge of human nature. The madness of Clementina is delineated with the pencil of a great master. Nothing can be more affecting than the distresses of Clarissa. He was conscious that his strength lay in the pathetic, and by this perhaps he was led to prolong scenes of sorrow till the spirits of the reader are fatigued, and the luxury of sympathy is overpowered.

The striking and animated character of Lovelace is supported to the last, with wonderful spirit. It is easy for an author to declare, that his hero is possessed of an infinite deal of wit and pleasantry, invention and eloquence: To make him display those qualities through a great variety of scenes, is very difficult, yet it has been executed by this author in the most successful manner. Richardson himself was undoubtedly convinced, that all those acomplishments, with the addition of youth, beauty, and the most undaunted intrepidity, would not prevent the profligacy, perfidy, and shocking cruelty of Lovelace from rendering him odious to every reader. In this, perhaps, he was mistaken. The brilliant colours in which Lovelace is painted are too apt to fascinate the imagination, and may have secured him a corner in the hearts even of some young women of character, in spite of his crimes. As for the young men, if none of them had ever attempted to imitate the profligacy of Lovelace, but those who possessed his accomplishments, the exhibition of his portrait would do little harm: but there is reason to fear, that some with the first only, and but a slender portion of the second, have sometimes attempted to pass for complete Lovelaces.

The late Henry Fielding, in the romance of Joseph Andrews, written in imitation of the style and manner of Cervantes, displayed much of the spirit and humour of his model; and he afterwards gave the world a still stronger proof of his knowledge of human nature, and the powers of his invention, by the publication of Tom Jones; a work wherein, after the imagination of the reader has been gratified by the exhibition of a variety of interesting scenes and characters, and his heart warmly engaged in the fortunes of the hero, his mind is agitated and alarmed by a series of incidents which seem to cross and obstruct the schemes and blast the hopes of him for whom he is now deeply interested, and whom he sees involved in unmerited disgrace, and threatened with ruin. At this point, when the whole horizon is covered with dark-

ness, and hardly one faint ray of light darts from any quarter, the clouds gradually begin to disperse, obscurity disappears, the intricacies become plain, the impediments that oppose the desired catastrophe are removed by means quite natural, though unforeseen, and the story flows clearly and delightfully to a conclusion; 'like a river,' to adopt the eloquent illustration of an ingenious writer of the present age, 'which in its progress foams among fragments of rocks, and for a while seems pent up by insurmountable oppositions, then angrily dashes for a while, then plunges under ground into caverns, and runs a subterraneous course, till at length it breaks out again, meanders round the country, and with a clear placid stream flows gently to the ocean.'*

Dr. Smollett, in the Continuation of his History of England, observes, that towards the end of the reign of George II, and about the beginning of that of his present majesty, 'genius in writing spontaneously arose; and though neglected by the great, flourished under the culture of a public which had pretensions to taste, and piqued itself on encouraging literary merit.' He proceeds to enumerate the most distinguished writers in the various branches of literature at that period, and gives his suffrage to the great talents of one who pursued the same line with himself, in the following words.—'The genius of Cervantes was transfused into the novels of Fielding, who painted the characters and ridiculed the follies of life with equal strength, humour, and propriety.'

The romances of Dr. Smollett are not so much distinguished for the invention of the story, as for strong masculine humour, just observations on life, and a great variety of original characters. In Humphry Clinker he hardly attempts any story; it is a mere vehicle for characters and remarks on life and manners. The characters of the different correspondents are supported throughout with the utmost propriety, and the peculiar style suitable

* Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding, Esq. by A. Murphy, Esq.

to each writer is maintained with more precision than in any romance in the epistolary form with which I am acquainted.

If we except the character of Lismahago, some features of which, though highly comic, are extravagantly stretched, Dr. Smollett has avoided the marvellous, and adhered more closely to nature and to familiar life in Humphry Clinker than in any of his other romances. It is justly observed by Dr. Anderson, in his life of Smollett, that this performance has all the spirit of his former works, and is the production of a mind mellowed by experience, and softened, not soured, by misfortune: it is peculiarly entertaining to observe his address and attention to nature, in the different representations of the same places and people, and transactions by the different characters.

Many useful lessons are given for the conduct of life, particularly in the story of Mr. Baynard, who is brought to the brink of ruin by the vanity of his wife and the good-natured facility of his temper. The whole of Bramble's account of the Temple of Cold Reception is admirably taken from nature.

The letters of Tabitha Bramble and Winifred Jenkins are pleasingly characteristic, and capable of surprising the most solemn of mankind into laughter, if their features be not kept steady by stupidity as well as pride.

From the assemblies of high life Dr. Smollett thought that humour was banished by ceremony, affectation, and cards; *that nature being castigated almost to still life, mirth never appeared but in an insipid grin.* His extreme fondness for humour therefore led him to seek it where it was to be found, namely, in the inferior societies of life, which, in despite of the acuteness with which he seized and described it, has exposed him to the censure of the fastidious.

The success of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, in this species of writing, produced, what great success generally does produce, a prodigious number of imitators: but by far the greatest part of them, like Hamlet's play-

ers, imitated abominably; and instead of representing the manners of the age, exhibited men and women, neither having the manners of Christians nor Pagans, and who seemed to have been made by the least expert of nature's journeymen.

There were, for a considerable time, so many novels written of this description, and with so few exceptions, that the very words Romance or Novel conveyed the idea of a frivolous or pernicious book. Even this, however, did not diminish the number, though it made many people at pains to declare, that for their part they never read novels; a declaration sometimes made by persons of both sexes, who never read any thing else. This is being by much too cautious. They might, with equal prudence, declare, that they never would read any book, because many books are silly or pernicious. The truth is, that the best romances always have been, and always will be, read with delight by men of genius; and with the more delight, the more taste and genius the reader happens to have. Nothing can be so interesting to men as man. The modern romances are or ought to be a representation of life and manners in the country where the scene is placed. Had works of this nature existed in the flourishing ages of the Greek and Roman republics, and had some of the best of them been preserved, how infinitely would they be relished at present! as they would give a much more minute and satisfactory picture of private and domestic life than is found in history, which dwells chiefly on war and affairs of state. This species of writing may also be made most subservient to the purposes of instruction; but even those which afford amusement only, provided they contain nothing immoral, are not without utility, and deserve by no means to be spoken of with that contempt which they sometimes are, by their most intimate acquaintance. These gentlemen ought to recollect in what manner they usually employ that portion of their time which they do not pass in reading what they so much affect to despise: they ought to recollect how many languid intervals there

are in their journey through life; how often they fill them up in a more pernicious way; and if a novel or romance should now and then help them to jog along with more innocence and less yawning, they ought to be a little more grateful.

It may be said, that such people had much better study books of science, or read moral essays or sermons. Unquestionably they had: but unfortunately they will not; for although some authors have shewn that it is possible to write sermons so that they shall be as much or more read than the best romance, yet this talent is extremely rare; and it is often lamented that sermons and moral essays, containing much good instruction, are less universally perused than many novels, more inelegantly written. What does this prove, but that there is something so peculiarly attractive in this species of writing, that performances, which would have been neglected in any other form, find readers in this?

Some very respectable authors have even insinuated, that romances are more entertaining than history itself, and that they thereby breed a dislike to that useful study. I fear this is not a likely argument to prevail on mankind to quit romances for history; and therefore, even if I were of that opinion, which is not the case, I should not publish it.

But it is universally known, that books of pure science and instruction, which require much thought, are not studied spontaneously by any but those who have already a considerable degree of steadiness of mind and desire of knowledge. Persons of dissipated minds, incapable of attention, who stand most in need of instruction, are the least willing to receive it; they throw such books down the moment they perceive their drift. But a romance in the highest degree entertaining, may be written with as moral an intention, and contain as many excellent rules for the conduct of life, as any book with a more solemn and scientific title. This, however, not being suspected by the persons above alluded to, they continue to read in

the confidence of meeting with amusement only, and fearless of any plot or plan for their instruction or improvement; they find folly ridiculed in a pleasant manner, vice placed in a degrading light, and a variety of instructive lessons so interwoven with an interesting story, that they cannot satisfy their curiosity until they have received impressions of a useful or virtuous nature, and thus acquire something infinitely more valuable than what they were in pursuit of.

ZELUCO.

VARIOUS VIEWS

OF

HUMAN NATURE,

TAKEN

FROM LIFE AND MANNERS,

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

——— Cur tamen hos tu
Evasisse putes, quos diri conscia facti
Mens habet attonitos, et surdo verbere cædit,
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum ?
Pœna autem vehemens, ac multo sævior illis,
Quas et Cæditius gravis invenit aut Rhadamanthus,
Nocte dieque suum gestare in pectore testem.

Juv.

ZELUCO.

CHAPTER I.

Strong Indications of a Vicious Disposition.

Religion teaches, that vice leads to endless misery in a future state; and experience proves, that in spite of the gayest and most prosperous appearances, inward misery accompanies her; for, even in this life, her ways are ways of wretchedness, and all her paths are woe.

This observation has been so often made, that it must be known to all, and its truth is seldom formally denied by any; yet the conduct of men would sometimes lead us to suspect, either that they had never heard it, or that they think it false. To recal a truth of such importance to the recollection of mankind, and to illustrate it by example, may therefore be of use.

Tracing the windings of vice, however, and delineating the disgusting features of villany, are unpleasant tasks: and some people cannot bear to contemplate such a picture. It is fair, therefore, to warn readers of this turn of mind not to peruse the story of Zeluco.

This person, sprung from a noble family in Sicily, was a native of Palermo, where he passed the years of early childhood, without being distinguished by any thing very remarkable in his disposition, unless it was a tendency to insolence, and an inclination to domineer over boys of inferior rank and circumstances. The bad tendency of this, however, was so strongly remonstrated against by his father, and others who superintended his education, that it

was in a great degree checked, and in a fair way of be entirely overcome.

In the tenth year of his age he lost his father, and left under the guidance of a mother, whose darling had ever been, and who had often blamed her husb for too great severity to a son, whom, in her fond opini nature had endowed with every good quality.

A short time after the death of his father, Zeluco gan to betray strong symptoms of that violent and ov bearing disposition to which he had always had a prop sity, though he had hitherto been obliged to restrain Had that gentleman lived a few years longer, the viole of Zeluco's temper would, it is probable, have been we ened, or entirely annihilated, by the continued influe of this habit of restraint, and his future life might h exhibited a very different character; for he shewed su cient command of himself as long as his father liv but very soon after his death, he indulged, without c troul, every humour and caprice; and his mistaken ther applauding the blusterings of petulence and prid indications of spirit, his temper became more and m ungovernable, and at length seemed as inflammable gunpowder, bursting into flashes of rage at the sligh touch of provocation.

It may be proper to mention one instance of this lence of temper, from which the reader will be enable form a juster notion than his mother did, of what kin spirit it was an indication.

He had a favourite sparrow, so tame that it picked cru from his hand, and hopped familiarly on the table. day it did not perform certain tricks which he had tau it, to his satisfaction. This put the boy into a passi the bird being frightened, attempted to fly off the ta He suddenly seized it with his hand, and while it str gled to get free, with a curse he squeezed the little mal to death. His tutor, who was present, was so sho ed at this instance of absurd and brutal rage, that he nished him as he deserved, saying, 'I hope this will

you of giving vent to such odious gusts of passion. If it does not, remember what I tell you, sir; they will render you hateful to others, wretched to yourself, and may bring you one day to open shame and endless remorse. Zeluco complained to his mother; and she dismissed the tutor, declaring, that she would not have her son's *vivacity* repressed by the rigid maxims of a narrow-minded pedant.

CHAPTER II.

> See how the world its veterans rewards!
> A youth of frolics—an old age of cards.
>
> POPE.

BEING now freed from that authority which had hitherto stimulated him to occasional exertions, Zeluco renounced all application to letters. This was partly owing to the love of dissipation and amusement natural to boys, but principally to the influence of a maxim very generally adopted by servants, and by them and other profound observers instilled into the minds of the young heirs of great fortunes, whose faculties it too often benumbs, like the touch of the torpedo, and renders them incapable through life of every praiseworthy exertion. The maxim is this,—that learning, although it is sometimes of service to those who are intended for certain professions, or are in any way to gain a livelihood by it, is entirely useless to men whose fortunes are already made.—It is hardly to be conceived how many young minds have been checked in the progress of improvement by the secret operation of this malignant doctrine.

The neglect of letters was compensated, in his mother's opinion, by his assiduous application to dancing, fencing, and other accomplishments of the same class. Indeed, she imagined he bestowed superfluous pains even on these, being persuaded that nature had done so much for her son, that there was no need of the ornaments of art.

Being captivated with the uniform of some Neapolitan

officers, Zeluco, at an early period of his life, announced a decided taste for the profession of arms. This heroic resolution was highly approved of by all those to whom he communicated it; which, indeed, was generally the case whatever he communicated, because he associated only with those who were ready to approve of all he did or proposed; for it was another miserable trait in this young man's character, to prefer the company of obsequious dependants, who on no occasion withhold their assent, to that of men of a liberal spirit or of equal rank with himself; a feature which infallibly puts an end to improvement, and renders a man at length as disagreeable to society as society is disagreeable to him.—The tender affection of his mother was not greatly alarmed at the martial resolution of her son, because, in the Neapolitan dominions, the profession of a soldier having no connection with fighting, this indulgent parent knew that her son's military ardour would subject him to no other danger than is attendant on reviews: to this she submitted, being aware that glory could not be obtained for nothing.

The pacific situation of the Neapolitan army, however, was not Zeluco's reason for preferring it; for he was naturally of a daring spirit. He, like many other idle young men, was attracted to the profession of arms by a relish for the dress of an officer, and by the vanity of command over a few soldiers. At this time he thought no deeper on the subject. An application was, therefore, made by this indulgent mother for a commission for her son; between which period and the time of its being granted, Zeluco counted the moments with the most fretful impatience; for although he had already ordered his regimentals, and often indulged himself in the pleasure of strutting in them before a mirror, yet he experienced the agonies of Tantalus till he could appear with them abroad. As the exigencies of the service did not require the immediate presence of Zeluco, he was permitted to remain at Palermo, and was introduced by his mother

into a select circle of her own acquaintance, which, she informed him, consisted of *the very best company* of Palermo, where he would acquire the most useful of all knowledge—the knowledge of the world—and this too in the most agreeable and most effectual manner.

This society was principally composed of a set of ladies of quality—maidens, wives, and widows—respectable undoubtedly on account of their sex and age; and a few gentlemen, who bore a wonderful resemblance in character to the ladies. Whatever business or avocation the members of this society had, besides those of cards and sleep, it must be confessed that such avocations occupied but a moderate share of their time, as all of them spent six or seven hours of the four-and-twenty in the former, and none of them allowed less than nine to the latter.

Zeluco's bloom, vivacity, and aptitude in learning the different games, procured him many flattering marks of attention from the female members. These for some time pleased the youth himself, while his mother was highly gratified with the congratulations poured out on all sides on the promising talents and charming appearance of her son; she reflected with pleasure also on the vast advantage which he enjoyed in being, at such an early period of his life, removed from the contagion of frivolous company, and introduced into so polished a circle.

What degree of improvement a steady and persevering cultivation of this society might have produced in Zeluco, was not fairly tried; for the flattery and blandishments of the old ladies soon became insipid, and he strayed in search of pleasure to those haunts where she appears with less decorum and more zest; soon after he joined his regiment at Naples, where he passed most of his time with a few young officers, who, with an equal passion for pleasure, had not equal means of indulging it, and were, therefore, too apt to flatter his vanity and bear his humours. The love of pleasure seemed to increase upon him by indulgence, and was greatly cherished by the ill-

judged prodigality of his mother, whose fondness could not resist his unrelenting importunity for money. The means with which this furnished him of indulging all his humours, in a country where rank claims an almost despotic sway over the lower orders of mankind, joined to his keeping company only with dependants, cherished and invigorated the seeds of caprice, selfishness, pride, and injustice, which had been early sown in the breast of Zeluco, and perhaps generated those which did not originally exist. With no pursuit but pleasure, and with superfluous means of attaining it, he enjoyed very little, being the constant slave of humour and caprice; and, besides, he looked forward with such fretful impatience to the period when the law allowed him the uncontrolled command of his fortune, as was sufficient of itself to embitter all his present enjoyments.

The original source of his wretchedness, and what had augmented, or perhaps generated, this miserable impatience of temper, was the indulgence of his humours and his being too liberally supplied in the means of gratification; but he himself imputed all his misery to the scanty allowance granted by his tutors, and to his not being of age.

Previous to this period he returned to Palermo; and although he did not attend his mother's assemblies with all the punctuality that she wished, yet he could not *always* resist the importunity of a mother who was ready to make every sacrifice for his gratification, and who exacted nothing in return but that he should give her the pleasure of seeing him admired in public, and condescend to bestow a little of his company on her in private.

The happy moment he had so anxiously sighed for arrived; and his guardians devolved into his own hands the entire conduct of his fortune. But while he remained in Sicily on account of certain arrangements, for which his presence was thought indispensably necessary, an incident occurred which detained him longer than he intended.

CHAPTER III.

> Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour;
> Content to dwell in decencies for ever.
>
> POPE.

One of the most important personages of the society into which Zeluco had been introduced, was the countess Brunella, a lady who took every opportunity of insinuating that she had been in her youth greatly distinguished for her beauty. Nothing, however, remained to justify her pretensions, except this single consideration, that as she had no fortune, and possessed no amiable quality, it was impossible to account for the marriage which raised her both to rank and fortune, but by supposing that, at the time it took place, she had been handsome. Her charms, however, whatever they had once been, were now entirely fled; but she still retained all the vanity, insolence, and caprice, which ever attended the bloom of beauty, with the addition of that peevishness and ill-humour which often accompany its decay. Her insolence, however, was only displayed to the unprotected, and her ill-humour to her servants; for, to her superiors she was always obsequious, and to her equals she wore an everlasting simper of approbation. This woman's benevolence was regulated by decorum; her friendship by convenience; and all her affections by etiquette. Her heart had no concern in any of these matters.

She was chaste, without being virtuous; because in *her* it proceeded from constitution, not sentiment. Guarded by the breast-plate of frigidity, which, like the Ægis of Minerva, repels the shafts of love, she walked through life erect, and steady to the dictates of decorum and self-interest, without a slip or false step.

Inexorable to all helpless females who, from the frailty of nature, or the perfidy of man, were observed to totter, or even to stoop, in their progress, she insisted that they should be for ever excluded from the society of the up-

right: and if any person shewed a disposition to palliate their errors, this vulture of chastity quitted, for a moment, the frail bird on whom she had pounced, and turned her envenomed beak against those who were for shewing the smallest degree of mercy; and being freed by nature from any propensity to one particular frailty, she indulged, without bounds, in the gratification of envy, hatred, slander, haughtiness, and other vices of the same class, for which, from her childhood, she had discovered a decided taste.

This lady had a niece who lived with her. The young lady had little or no fortune in her own possession, and as little in expectation from her aunt, who was too vain and ostentatious to save any of her income, ample as it was. But the countess flattered herself that she should procure her niece such a marriage as would instantly supply all deficiencies, and raise her to wealth and grandeur. She made several unsuccessful attempts for that purpose; the failure proceeded more from the general dislike in which the aunt was held, than from the want of attractions in the young lady.

A little after Zeluco came of age, the aunt fixed her eyes on him as a commodious match for her niece.—She was not unacquainted with his irregularities; but as she considered rank and fortune as the great essentials in a husband, these being secured, she thought the rest of small importance. On former occasions she had proved, that she looked upon age and infirmity as no obstacles to the honour of being a husband to her niece, and by the pains she now took to draw in Zeluco to a marriage, she made it clear that she considered profligacy as an objection equally frivolous.

She began by paying uncommon attention to the mother of Zeluco; as the countess Brunella was her superior by nuptial rank, this attention greatly flattered the vanity of that weak woman.—She had for some time observed that Zeluco seemed to pay more particular regard to her niece than to any other young lady at Palermo;

and she carefully instructed her in the arts of cherishing a moderate degree of liking into a violent passion. But this young lady, with less prudence, had much more sensibility than her aunt. The genteel figure and alluring manners of Zeluco seduced her into all the unsuspecting confidence of love; but he, amidst affected passion, preserved all the circumspection of determined perfidy.

Whilst the aunt, therefore, was artfully planning what she considered as an advantageous match for her niece, the unwary young woman granted, without marriage, what her aunt in similar circumstances had carefully preserved; not from any value she put upon the thing, but merely because she knew that by that means alone she could secure the husband who then paid his court to her.

Zeluco soon became tired of his conquest, and disgusted with the tears of the unhappy girl. He neglected her with an unfeeling indifference more unpardonable than the crime he had committed. This being observed by the aunt, she questioned her niece, who candidly confessed what her situation would in a short time have revealed.

The countess expostulated with Zeluco, attempting to obtain by threats, what integrity and a sense of honour ought to have inclined him to perform. He treated her threats with derision, and with all the coolness of a veteran in iniquity he told her, that if *she* chose to keep her niece's secret, *he* should: in which case, by the industry of her aunt, she might still be provided with a husband: 'in the meantime,' added he sarcastically, 'it is to be hoped that you will make your own niece an exception from your favourite maxim, that all who have made a single false step should be for ever excluded from respectable society.'

The young lady retired to a relation's in the country, and the adventure might have remained unknown to the public, had not the aunt, in the madness of her resentment, prompted a Neapolitan officer, who depended on her interest for his promotion, to call Zeluco to an account for his conduct on this occasion. Zeluco, who was consti-

tutionally intrepid, had, for some time, wished for an opportunity of fighting a duel, the eclat of which was wanting to his reputation. He went out at the first hint with the Neapolitan, and being an admirable swordsman, wounded and disarmed him; and thus became an object of greater admiration in the eyes of many ladies than ever, both on account of this duel, and the occasion of it.

The rage, disappointment, and wounded pride of the aunt, when she knew the event of the duel, rendered her exceedingly miserable; but as in her prosperity she had no feeling for the unfortunate, her own misfortunes excited no compassion. Some of her most intimate acquaintance, who passed for her friends, involving the niece in their hatred of the aunt, betrayed a malicious satisfaction at the fate of the unhappy young woman. And what was equally unjust, the public indignation at the base conduct of Zeluco, was not so great as it ought to have been, merely because the person he had ruined was the niece of this odious dowager.

This woman might have gone through life with as few enemies as friends, had she remained passively selfish; but she was making continual professions of friendship; she affected to be the dearest friend of all her acquaintance, and to take a most extraordinary share of interest in all their concerns. Each of them in their turns discovered that her professions were false—from her acquaintance they became her enemies, and beheld her misfortunes with joy, which otherwise they would have regarded only with indifference.

CHAPTER IV.

The Gratitude of a Son to an indulgent Mother.

A SHORT time after this adventure, Zeluco passed over to Italy, and in the different states of that luxurious country he spent two years, in every voluptuous and expensive gratification that his own imagination or that of

the profligate company he kept could suggest. His mother had parted from him with reluctance; her fond partiality remained strong as ever, in spite of all the proofs of a vicious disposition he had displayed: she viewed his character in a manner precisely the reverse of that in which Desdemona contemplated Othello's; she saw Zeluco's *mind in his visage:* and as this was fair and regular, she fondly believed it to be a faithful index of the other, imputing all that part of his conduct which she could not justify, to the warmth of youth, which a little time and reflection would soon correct. She extracted a promise from him, before they parted, that he should write to her regularly twice every month till his return. And as she had observed on many occasions that he was by no means exact in fulfilling his engagements, she took this promise with some solemnity, and made him renew it oftener than once; adding, that if he neglected, she should certainly imagine that something very terrible had happened: she therefore entreated him very earnestly, by a punctual correspondence, to save her from such a painful idea.

The manner in which Zeluco fulfilled this engagement will set his filial affection in a clear point of view.

In a very short space after his arrival on the continent, he began to think the writing a few lines every fortnight to his mother a piece of intolerable slavery.—And being, while at Rome, confined to his chamber, on account of a complaint which debarred him equally from pleasure and amusement, he thought this a commodious opportunity of anticipating the trouble of a correspondence which was apt to break in upon him at less convenient seasons. He therefore wrote a number of letters to his mother, a little varied in the expression, and properly dated; these he arranged according to their dates, and then calling his valet de chambre,—'There,' said he, 'carry one of these letters to the post-house every fortnight, and when they are exhausted let me know, that I may prepare some more for the old lady.'

It would be equally superfluous and disagreeable to

follow Zeluco through the scenes of extravagance, folly, and vice, in which he acted a principal part for two or three years in the various towns of Italy. Although he had been happy during the whole of that short period, it would have been happiness rather too dearly bought at the expense of the misery and remorse he felt on finding his credit exhausted, and his fortune involved to such a degree, that nothing but a long and steady course of economy could possibly extricate it:—but he had not even the recollection of happiness to comfort him for the ruin of his affairs;—his fortune had been dissipated in debauchery, without pleasure; in magnificence, which conferred not respect; and in gaming, which sometimes drove him to the brink of desperation. Let this general account save us from entering into a detail of adventures which bear the strongest resemblance to those of so many profligate young men who have acted the same parts on the same theatre.

When his money and credit were nearly exhausted, he joined his regiment at Naples: where, after having remained a decent time to entitle him to ask a new leave of absence, he made application for permission to pass over to Sicily for the arrangement of his domestic affairs.

On his return to Palermo he had no immediate resource but in what his mother could spare him from her own jointure; and these supplies were not granted without strong remonstrances against his extravagance. Those, however, he heard with apparent patience, and repeated assurances of amendment, as long as she had either money or credit remaining; but when both were exhausted, he shewed the same impatient and overbearing temper to her he had always given proofs of to the rest of the world; but what in the one case she had palliated as the ebullitions of youthful spirit and vivacity, in the other she considered as the most unheard-of cruelty and ingratitude.—In the bitterness of her heart, she enumerated every instance of indulgence, generosity, and affection she had shewn him, and upbraided him for there-

turns he had made, in terms dictated by rage and disappointment. He answered with the most insulting coolness and the most stinging indifference. The unhappy woman was wounded to the soul.—She had looked forward with parental impatience to the hour of her son's return.—Her spirits had risen or fallen as that happy epoch seemed to advance or to recede.—Her daily prayer, and nightly dream, was this darling son's return, improved by experience, accomplished by travel, the object of universal admiration, while she imagined that she herself would be envied by every mother in Palermo.

Her disappointment was as severe as her hopes had been sanguine.—She felt

> How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child.———

She retired to the house of a poor relation who lived in the neighbourhood of Palermo;—one whom she had neglected in the pride of her prosperity; a circumstance which made her misery more acute, and her misfortune less pitied in this retreat. After languishing a few months, she died heart-broken.

The emotions of remorse which took place on this event in the conscious mind of Zeluco were not of long duration;—his embarrassed circumstances gave him more lasting uneasiness; for, notwithstanding his estate was now disburdened of his mother's jointure, he was still under the necessity of confining himself to a very scanty revenue.

Being mortified with the idea of remaining either in Sicily or the kingdom of Naples while his affairs were in this embarrassed situation, he applied to a brother of his father, an officer of rank in the Spanish service who was then at Madrid, declaring a desire of entering into that service, on condition of obtaining the same rank in the Spanish service which he had in the Neapolitan, with the hope of future promotion. He had already got leave from the Neapolitan court for this step, with a recom-

mendation from the minister. His plan was to put his estate under management till such time as the most pressing debts were cleared; and he thought, with the remainder of his fortune added to his pay, he should pass his time more to his mind in the character of a soldier, than he could by observing a languid system of economy in Sicily.

CHAPTER V.

The Love of a very young Lady.

Fallere credentem non est operosa puellam
Gloria. Ovid Epist.

While Zeluco waited the result of this application, a young lady of Palermo became, by the sudden death of her brother, heiress of a very considerable fortune; for although her father was still alive, and her mother only forty years of age, yet as she had not proved pregnant for many years, the daughter's succeeding to her father's whole fortune was considered as next to infallible. This certainly was the opinion of Zeluco, and he immediately applied every art of insinuation he was possessed of, to gain the affections of this young lady.

Zeluco was of a very elegant as well as a vigorous make; his person was finely proportioned; and although some people who pretended to skill in physiognomy asserted, that they could detect the indications of ill-nature and of a vicious disposition in his countenance; yet, in the general opinion, and particularly in that of Signora Rosolia, (the young lady in question), he was a very handsome man. Rosolia was one of those young ladies who, when they greatly approve of a man's face and figure, are inclined to believe that every other good quality is added thereunto.

A gentleman superior to Zeluco in all respects but external figure had for some time, with the approbation of her parents, paid his addresses to her. But no sooner

had the new lover made a declaration of his passion, than he appeared in her eyes preferable to the old. On what this preference was founded appeared afterwards, when Zeluco lamented his hard fate in having a rival who was countenanced by both her parents; for Rosolia then assured him, that this could proceed solely from their not being informed of Zeluco's sentiments; 'But as soon as they are,' added she, 'they will certainly prefer you as a son-in-law to Signor Michelo.'

'I am extremely happy to know that you are of that opinion,' cried Zeluco.

'I am quite certain of it,' said she.

'You have heard them speak upon the subject then,' said he.

'No, never;' replied she.

'Idol of my soul,' cried Zeluco, 'how then are you certain that they would prefer me to Signor Michelo?'

'Because,' replied this judicious young lady, 'there is no comparison between you. Every body that has eyes must see that you are a far handsomer man.'

However flattering it may seem, Zeluco was a good deal disappointed when he was informed of the circumstance on which she founded her hopes, and he thought his surest course was to get possession of the young lady's fortune and person, in the first place, and to solicit the father and mother's consent afterwards.

Having expressed his gratitude on account of the favourable sentiments she entertained of him, he told her, 'That parents often viewed things of this nature in a different light from their children.—That his rival had probably secured the favour of her father and mother, by applying to them in the first instance; because her fortune, not her heart, was that gentleman's sole object.—That he, on the contrary, had given no hint of his passion to *them*, but had applied directly to *her*, because it was her heart alone that he was solicitous about. As for fortune, it was what he had always despised, and had not the least weight with him in his present suit,—of which

disinterested way of thinking he was ready to give her an immediate proof, by marrying her secretly without any person's consent but her own, and without the certainty of a single sequin.'

The young lady, in answer to this, told him, 'That she could not comply with his proposal without impiety; for that her mother having been alarmed on a former occasion with the assiduities of a person she did not approve, had conducted her to the *Madre Chiesa*; and in the chapel of St. Rosolia, in the presence of the saint herself, had made her pledge her solemn promise, never to give her hand in marriage without the consent of her father and mother; assuring her, at the same time, that they, on their part, should never exact of her to marry any man contrary to her inclination.'

'It is impossible for me therefore,' added this pious young lady, 'to break the engagement, without incurring the displeasure not only of my parents but also of my patroness, who hitherto hath always displayed great kindness to me, and will certainly not easily forgive the breach of an engagement to which she herself was an eye-witness.'

Zeluco, perceiving that the idea of provoking St. Rosolia filled the lady's mind with horror, did not think it prudent to insist at that time on the point he wished to carry;—he took her promise, however, that she should not mention what had passed to her parents, till he had time to reflect on what were the properest measures to adopt.

This injunction she punctually observed.—At their next interview, he told Rosolia, that he had been considering what she had said, regarding the promise she had given to her mother in the chapel of her patroness; 'That he was not surprised to find this made great impression on one of her piety and understanding. This, and similar instances of the goodness of her disposition,' he said, 'endeared her to him more and more; for although the graces of her face and person had made the first impression on his heart, yet it was the beauties of her mind, the

amiable sweetness of her disposition, her piety, and above all her admirable good sense, that rivetted his chains.' Zeluco had an opinion, that people in general are most gratified when praised for those qualities in which they are most deficient. On this principle, he never failed to praise this young lady on the superior excellency of her understanding.

He then proceeded to observe, that with respect to the engagement which she imagined she had entered into at the Madre Cheisa, she had evidently been surprised into it, and it was not to be supposed that St. Rosolia could, *in her heart*, approve of so rash a vow, especially as it had been made without her previous consent; adding, that as for himself, he was certain that he should not survive the refusal he was sure of receiving from her mother:—he therefore left it to the young lady to consider whether it was probable St. Rosolia, her patroness, and, without a doubt, the most compassionate of all the saints, would approve of a measure which would infallibly occasion the death of a person who was, and had ever been, her faithful votary. And all for what? to gratify hard-hearted parents, who only consulted their own avarice, and disregarded true love.

As the tenderness of this young lady's heart was equal to the weakness of her understanding, and both infinitely surpassed those graces and beauties which Zeluco had so liberally imputed to her, she began to be convinced by his reasoning, and melted by his entreaties; but having, in the course of their conversation, said, that she was quite certain of prevailing on her father at least to give his consent,—for he had always been in the highest degree indulgent to her, and never had, in any one instance, withstood her persevering solicitation; Zeluco, contrary to his first opinion, thought it would be most prudent to allow her to try to move her father; and if, in spite of her sanguine hope, she should fail, he still would have it in his power to persuade her into a secret marriage.

CHAPTER VI.

The Reasoning of a young Lady in Love.—The Weakness of a Father.

THE impatience of the lady's love made her seize the very earliest opportunity of acquainting her father with the state of her heart, which she did in very pathetic terms.

The astonished father at first insisted on the encouragement which had been given to her first lover, the real worth of his character, and the advantages of such a connection. To these arguments the lady opposed her love for Zeluco, and her indifference for the other.

The father hinted at the embarrassed situation of Zeluco's circumstances.

The lady declared, that this gave her peculiar satisfaction, because it afforded a proof to the whole world, that in so material a point as the choice of a husband, she was superior to all low and sordid considerations, which could not fail of raising her in the esteem of the judicious, and would for ever insure to her the gratitude, as well as the love, of her husband.

The father suggested, that while she thus proved the disinterested purity of her own conduct; she could not be certain that her lover was actuated by the same noble and disinterested motives.

To this the daughter, with equal readiness and warmth, replied, that Zeluco had already given the most undoubted proofs of the generous turn of his mind; his superiority to all mercenary views and sordid considerations, by the magnificent manner in which he had spent the greatest part of his own fortune.

The father shook his head with an air of dissatisfaction, and then mentioned the libertine character of Zeluco, the number of women he had seduced, and his neglect of them afterwards; dwelling, with emphasis, on the cruel treatment of the countess Brunella's niece.

This was an unlucky argument, and produced an effect directly contrary to what was intended. The young lady acknowledged, that 'Zeluco had been wild and rakish;—most young men of spirit were;—that he had turned the heads of many young women,—no wonder, he was so very genteel and handsome;—that he had afterwards neglected them because he found them unworthy of his esteem, and they, of course, accused him of inconstancy;—that Signora Brunella's niece was a *very weak young woman;* it was not to be supposed a man of Zeluco's good sense would ever dream of taking such a person for his wife;—that, for her own part, she was aware, that by entirely possessing a man so greatly admired by all other women, she must be exposed to the envy of her own sex;—but that internal tranquillity, and domestic happiness, would enable her to despise their disappointment and malice; for she knew that Zeluco had fixed his heart upon her, and her alone; was now determined to reform, and to be constant; and all the world allowed that reformed rakes made the very best of husbands.'

The young lady's last arguments seeming rather to alarm than convince her father, she had recourse to a method of reasoning which she had often found successful when all others failed.—She burst into a flood of tears, sobbed as if she had been ready to expire; and when she recovered her voice, declared that her heart was fixed upon Signor Zeluco, who had given her the surest proofs of the sincerity of his love, and of his noble and generous character:—that happiness in marriage depended on mutual affection and endless passion, and not at all upon fortune;—that she would wander over the wide world with her lover, blest in his fidelity, and depending on St. Rosolia for protection and sustenance, rather than live in the greatest affluence with any other man, although he were the first monarch on earth, or even the king of Naples, Jerusalem, and the Two Sicilies himself:—that these were her unalterable sentiments, or if any alteration could happen, it would be that of an increase, not a diminution, of

her love, for she felt it augmenting every hour; and finally, she entreated on her knees, that he would prove himself an affectionate father to a daughter who had always loved and honoured him, and would obey him in every thing but in this one point, which, she was sorry to say, was out of her power; and which, if he insisted upon, he would soon behold her laid in the same grave with her dearest brother, whom he had so long and so bitterly lamented.'

Before the daughter had finished this affecting address, the good-natured father was also in tears, and as soon as he was able to speak, he raised her up, with an assurance that her happiness was his chief object in life, and he would do every thing she could desire to promote it.

Having thus melted her father to compliance, she begged, in the next place, that he would use his influence with her mother, that she might likewise consent to the only measure that could make her truly happy, which the good-natured man engaged to do.

CHAPTER VII.

The Prudence of a Mother; and Termination of Everlasting Love.

The father speedily had an opportunity of breaking the subject to his lady, assuring her at the same time that he was convinced their daughter would never marry any man but Zeluco; so that she had best save herself the trouble of endeavouring to prevent it, as he had already said every thing that could be said, and without effect.

He was then proceeding to give her an account of the scene which had passed between them, when she saved him the trouble, informing him she had overheard the whole in an adjoining room, where she happened to be when his daughter had made the pathetic attack upon him above described. Perceiving that her husband's heart was quite melted by the daughter's tears, and his

resolution moulded to her views, she declined all discussion with him; and thought it not prudent to let him into the plan which she had already formed in her mind, to disentangle her daughter from a connection fraught with ruin and remorse. She contented herself therefore with saying coolly, 'That although she did not much relish the match, yet, as she could not think of crossing her daughter's inclinations, she certainly would not persist in opposition, if, on full deliberation, the young lady continued in the same mind; and at all events she would take no step without the concurrence of her husband, who, she was pleased to add, was a much better judge in a matter of such importance than she could pretend to be.'

In reply to this the husband said, 'That he candidly acknowledged that he was *a far better judge*;' adding, 'that it was impossible for him ever to change his mind.'

'Not quite, my dear,' said the wife meekly; 'you were under the necessity of changing your mind before you could relinquish the *unalterable* resolution you told me yesterday you had formed, of giving your daughter to Signor Michelo, whom we then equally approved of.'

'I did not know *yesterday*,' said he, a little disconcerted, 'that Zeluco was the *only* man who could make our daughter happy.'

He then went and acquainted his daughter that he had prevailed on her mother to consent to her marriage with Zeluco.

The young lady flew in a transport of joy to her mother, asked her forgiveness for having disposed of her heart without consulting so indulgent a parent:—informed her, that she was now absolutely certain of St. Rosolia's being pleased with her choice; and assured her, that for the future she would be the most obedient and dutiful of all daughters.

The mother thanked her for her good intentions, and asked her how she came to be so certain of the saint's acquiescence.

'Because,' replied the pious young lady, 'as I have

been able to think, or even to dream of nothing for some time, but my marriage with Signor Zeluco, after attending mass this very morning, I retired to the chapel of the saint, and looking her devoutly in the face, and watching her eyes, I humbly entreated to know whether she approved of my passion or not?—On which, the sweet image of Rosolia looked in the most propitious manner; and at length, with a gracious smile, nodded assent.'

'Nay,' said the mother, 'after such a testimony of approbation there can be no doubt.—And have you equal proofs, my dear, of Signor Zeluco's love?'

'Stronger, if possible,' answered the daughter;—'he has sworn it to me an hundred times; and besides, I have it under his hand.'

'These are proofs, indeed,' said the mother; 'and,' continued she, 'you have no reason to doubt that all this love is for you alone, independent of your fortune!'

'Santa Maria!' exclaimed the daughter, 'Signor Zeluco is not only the most loving, but also the most disinterested of mankind.—He has often assured me, that he would be still happier if my fortune were less, that he might prove to the world how far he is above all mean and mercenary views.'

'Then it is highly probable,' said the mother, 'that he will enjoy the felicity he so earnestly desires; for I shall now inform you, my dear, of what I did not choose to hint till I was quite certain of it: I am several months gone with child, which, at any rate, will reduce your fortune one half; and in case of a son, will leave you a very moderate portion.'

'I wish with all my heart you may have a son, my dear mother; for I should like a little brother of all things,' cried Rosolia.

'Very well, my dear,' said the mother; 'you will very probably obtain your wish. But,' continued she, 'I suppose you would not wish that your marriage should take place till I am recovered of my lying-in, that I may join in the pleasure of such an occasion.'

'Good heaven! certainly not,' answered the daughter; and immediately went, in raptures, to communicate these glad tidings to Zeluco, whose joy at the parents acquiescence was prodigiously damped on hearing of the situation of the mother. His chagrin was evident on his countenance.

'I perceive,' said the young lady tenderly, 'that the postponing of our happiness till my mother shall be delivered grieves you.'

'Very severely indeed,' said Zeluco. 'Be not afflicted, my dear Zeluco,' said this love-sick maiden, 'I will endeavour to prevail on her to consent to our union before she is delivered.'

Zeluco begged she would not attempt it, as it might give offence, and render her mother averse to the match altogether.

She then, in the most endearing manner, assured him, that the delay gave her very near as much uneasiness as it could him; but he, on the other hand, protested, that he felt the disappointment with greater poignancy than she could possibly do, which, however, he would endeavour to bear, rather than risk disobliging her mother, especially in her present condition, when the smallest importunity might injure her precious health.

'But, good God,' added he, 'did you never before suspect that she was in this condition?'

'Never,' said this penetrating young lady; 'though I am surprised at it; for the moment she mentioned it, I plainly perceived that her waist was uncommonly large.'

Zeluco retired, in all the agonies of disappointment; but determined to be more fully informed before he gave up a pursuit on which he had founded the re-establishment of his fortune.

He called the following morning on a certain monk, who occasionally exercised the function of a physician, and was known to be employed in that capacity by the mother of Signora Rosolia.

of rain.—' I do not know what in the devil's name to do with myself,' said Zeluco.—' You had as well take this opportunity of writing to Signora Rosolia,' said his valet, —' she may perhaps be a little surprised at our sudden departure.'—' Ay, so I will; bring me pen, ink, and paper,' said Zeluco, yawning.

The servant supplied him with the materials for writing; and this ardent lover renewing his fits of yawning very frequently during the performance, at last finished the epistle.

Signora Rosolia, when she heard of Zeluco's having sailed for Spain, immediately fainted, as is usual with young ladies when they are abandoned by men who pretend to be dying for them, and whom they consider as the only men who can make them happy:—she continued for some weeks subject to hysterical affections: these, however, gradually disappeared; and her old lover, by the mediation of her mother, renewing his courtship, she was in due time prevailed on to give him her hand. Her mother then informed her, that she was mistaken in the notion of her being with child. And the day after her marriage, the daughter, in return, declared to her mother, that she herself had undoubtedly mistaken the image of St. Rosolia, being now convinced that her present husband was the only man who could make her completely happy.

' I hope, my dear,' said the mother, ' he is the only man who ever will attempt it.'

CHAPTER VIII.

His Generosity gets Credit for what was due to his Resentment.

ZELUCO was received in the kindest manner by his uncle at Madrid, who viewed his past extravagances in the most favourable light, considering them as entirely proceeding from youthful vivacity and imprudence. He therefore treat-

ed him with all the respect due to the head of his own family; introduced him to every house of distinction; flattering himself, that the ardent spirit of his nephew might excite him to the same impetuous pursuit of military glory with which he had followed pleasure, and fondly hoping that he would one day arrive at higher distinction than he would have attained by an unambitious prudence of conduct in the Neapolitan service, which afforded no opportunity of displaying military genius. After pointing out the advantages he would derive from his birth, he inculcated the necessity of distinguishing himself by activity as an officer, that he might give an early impression in his favour, and smooth the way to that rapid promotion he had reason to expect, from his exertions in an army where discipline was greatly relaxed, and in which few men of rank distinguished themselves.

Zeluco was appointed to a regiment then on its march to one of the sea-port towns, but with permission to remain at Madrid till the troops should arrive at the place of their destination, and were completed. He spent this interval in those societies to which he had been introduced by his uncle, and being sufficiently sensible of the graces of his own person, he was not without hopes of engaging the affections of some female as wealthy as Signora Rosolia, and whose mother was less liable to pregnancy.

At some of those assemblies, gaming, to a considerable depth, was permitted. Zeluco had always been fond of play, and had acquired, at the usual expense, a very great knowledge in most games; yet he by no means possessed that degree of coolness and command of temper which is requisite for a gamester: he was sensible of this himself, but he could not always resist the temptation of gaming; and sometimes, not satisfied with the play at the assemblies, he went in search of deeper stakes at less creditable houses.

At first he was fortunate, which encouraged him to attend those houses more constantly. One unlucky evening, however, he lost all the money he had about him, amounting to a considerable sum; most part of it was won

by a person who had lately appeared at Madrid, assuming the character of an Hungarian gentleman, with the rank of a lieutenant-colonel of hussars in the emperor's service. As the company played for ready money only, when Zeluco had lost his, he sat in very ill-humour, overlooking those who continued to play: in this disposition it was not unnatural in him to suspect that the person who had won his money had, by other means besides superior skill in the game, assisted his own good fortune. Zeluco watched him with the most malignant attention, wishing to detect him in some unfair trick, and ready to quarrel with him even if he should not.

The game was pass-dice. A young stranger held the dice, and had already won four times; and as his whole money had been covered each time, the sum before him was now sixteen times larger than what he had originally staked. But while he seemed preparing to throw a fifth time, there was only about a third part of the money which he now had on the table taken by the company.

On observing this, the stranger said, 'Does nobody choose to take more?' Every body declined, on which he put the residue of the money into his pocket; but as he shook the box, being about to throw, the hussar officer cried, Banco; and the others took up what they had staked.

The rule of the game is, that if any one person offers to take the whole, the rest of the company, who have taken smaller sums, immediately withdraw their money in favour of the person who offers to stand against the entire bank: that is to say, the whole sum which the person who holds the dice has on the table.

The hussar meant to avail himself of the equivocal situation of the case: if the dice should prove fortunate to the thrower, he intended to pay the exact sum on the table; but in case the dice turned against the stranger, he resolved to claim not only that, but also what the young gentleman had just put into his pocket.

The stranger threw and lost. 'Take your money,' said he; shoving the whole parcel to the Hungarian.

The latter insisted on having that also which he had put into his pocket, saying, it belonged to the bank as much as what remained on the table, since there had been no intervening throw.

The young gentleman was astonished at his demand, asserting, that the money he had pocketed was entirely out of the question, having been withdrawn before the Hungarian had spoken. That if the officer meant both sums, he ought to have declared that meaning when he called Banco; adding, that in case he had done so, or if the company had set against the whole of his winning, he himself had determined to pass the box, and not have risked so great a sum on one throw.

This pretended colonel, however, who was a stout man, with a long sabre and a formidable pair of whiskers, was loud and boisterous in asserting his right to the whole. The stranger defended his cause but faintly; the company in general, whatever they thought of the justice of the case, did not seem disposed to assert the stranger's claim against this ferocious hussar.

In this state of affairs, Zeluco, who burned with resentment against the person who had won his money, said, 'It was a clear case, and that the Hungarian had a right to nothing but the sum on the table when he first spoke;' adding, 'he was convinced if he had lost he would have paid no more.' 'How, sir!—What do you mean?' cried the Hungarian, turning fiercely round to Zeluco. 'I mean precisely what I said,' replied the latter. 'What, sir, repeated the hussar, in a loud tone of voice, and putting his hand to his sword. 'Yes, sir,' cried Zeluco, 'and further, I mean to cut the throat of any rascally adventurer who dares be insolent to me:' saying this, he half drew his sword, when the company interposed. The hussar affected not to have heard Zeluco's last words, but said, in a softened tone, 'That if the company were of opinion that his claim was not strictly just, he was willing

to yield it.'—'Willing or unwilling, you shall yield it,' cried Zeluco; and the company being *now* unanimous in favour of the stranger, the pretended Hungarian officer withdrew from the assembly; and next morning early he left Madrid, afraid that this incident would produce an investigation exceedingly prejudicial to him, being conscious that he had no title to the character he assumed.

This adventure was much talked of, and did a great deal of honour to Zeluco. It was peculiarly agreeable to his generous uncle, who, having heard that his nephew had been unfortunate on the night in which he had behaved with such spirit, presented him with a sum sufficient for clearing all his expenses at Madrid, and equipping him in the genteelest manner for his expedition to the West Indies. Zeluco himself, having no immediate prospect of meeting with another Rosolia, grew tired of the formality of Madrid, and impatient to join his regiment, which he understood had now arrived at the head-quarters.

This resolution being communicated to the uncle, was imputed by him to a laudable zeal for the service. The worthy veteran assured him, that he would take particular care of his interest, and assist his promotion with all his influence at court, making no doubt but his efforts for that purpose would be rendered successful by the rising reputation of Zeluco.

The regiment was in a very short time completed, and soon after embarked for the island of Cuba, where it arrived in safety.

CHAPTER IX.

The Remonstrance of an old Officer.

La ferocité naturelle fait moins de cruels que l'amour-propre.
DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO possessed not the generous ardour of a soldier; his impatience for promotion was excited by the hopes of

emolument more than a thirst for military glory; and if he was willing to suffer fatigue and incur danger, it was because in his present situation they were necessary for his obtaining some lucrative command, that might speedily furnish him with the means of pleasure and luxurious enjoyment, which he considered as the only sensible pursuits in life.

Having heard that the commander in chief was a very strict and attentive officer, and Zeluco's views being now centered in military promotion, he was impatient to acquire favour and recommendation by distinguishing himself as a disciplinarian; naturally selfish and unfeeling, he was not checked in the prosecution of this plan by any sentiment of justice or compassion; provided he could make the men under his command more dexterous in their exercise, or more smart in their appearance, than others, he regarded not the inconveniency or torture he occasioned to them; nor did he care whether this was of use to the service or not; he was convinced it might be of use to himself, and that was sufficient. Without temper to make allowance for the awkwardness of recruits, or equity in proportioning punishments to crimes, his orders were often dictated by caprice and enforced by cruelty; he exacted from the private men such a degree of precision in the manual exercise, and in the minutiæ of their dress, as was almost out of the power of the most dexterous and best disposed to observe.

Provoked and irritated on finding that the soldiers did not arrive at that degree of perfection which his vanity required, and becoming daily more unreasonable and unrelenting by the exercise of power, he exhibited many instances of cruelty on a detachment from the garrison of Havannah, of which he had for some time the command.

His conduct on that and other occasions came to the knowledge of the commander in chief by the following incident.

A soldier having committed some slight mistake in the exercise, Zeluco treated him with great severity, which

the man endured with all the passiveness which military discipline exacts;—till Zeluco, swelling with the insolence of power, expressed himself in this barbarous and absurd manner.—'If you are not more alert for the future, you scoundrel, I will cut you to pieces, and send your soul to hell.'

To this the man replied with tranquillity,—'Your honour may cut me to pieces, if you please; but I thank God it is not in your power to send my soul to hell.'

This very sedate answer, while it raised a smile in others who heard it, augmented the rage of Zeluco.

'Do you mutiny, villain?' cried Zeluco.

'I do not, indeed,' said the soldier.

'I'll let you know in due time,' said Zeluco, 'whether you do or not.'

He ordered the man to be carried to the guard prison, and put in irons.

Zeluco had been long disliked by all his fellow-officers.—On talking over this matter with some of them, in order to prepossess them with the opinion that what the soldier had said amounted to mutiny, he found them little disposed to consider it in that light; he was in no haste, therefore, to bring the man to a court-martial, being convinced he would be acquitted: but he had it insinuated to the soldier himself, that if he would acknowledge a mutinous intention, and implore mercy, he should be liberated without a trial; whereas, if he were tried, he would certainly be severely punished.

But the soldier, secretly encouraged by those of the officers who most detested Zeluco, refused to make any such avowal, and remained in irons.

Meanwhile the chaplain of the regiment having visited the soldier, approved of his conduct, declaring he could not justly be punished for an answer so orthodox. He next day informed the commander in chief of the whole transaction.

This gentleman, unwilling to rely entirely on the account he had received, sent for some of the officers be-

longing to the detachment, and obtained from them the same information which he had already received from the chaplain.

In the meantime Zeluco, having got a hint of what was going on, freed the soldier from confinement. But the indignation of the commanding officer being roused by what he had heard, he made inquiries into Zeluco's conduct to the soldiers on other occasions; and soon discovered, with astonishment, and some degree of self-condemnation, that many acts of unnecessary severity and oppression had been committed by Zeluco. Having blamed some officers, whose duty he thought it was to have informed him of those transactions sooner, he sent for Zeluco, and in the presence of all the officers of the battalion to which he belonged, he addressed him to the following effect.—

'SIGNOR ZELUCO,

'I think it my duty to deliver my sentiments to you before these gentlemen, on a subject that ought to be well understood by every officer; but of which it appears by your conduct you have formed very erroneous notions.

'Strict discipline is essentially requisite for the well-being of an army; without which it degenerates into a lawless mob, more formidable to their friends than enemies; the ravagers, not the defenders of their country.

'But it is equally essential that discipline be exercised with temper and with justice; a capricious and cruel exertion of power in officers depresses the spirits of the private men, and extinguishes that daring ardour which glows in the breast of a real soldier.

'Is it possible that a man of a generous mind can treat with wanton cruelty those who are not permitted to resist, or even to expostulate, however brave they may be?

'I believe, sir, you have not as yet served in time of war; but I will inform you, that in the course of my services I have seen common soldiers gallantly face the ene-

my, when some officers, who had been in the habit of using them with insult and cruelty, shrunk from the danger.

'You are sufficiently acquainted with the condition of private soldiers, to know, that when they are treated with all the lenity consistent with proper discipline, still their condition is surrounded with such a variety of hardships, that every person of humanity must wish it were possible to alleviate it.

'Only reflect, sir, on the smallness of their pay; how inadequate to the duty required of them, and how far beneath the intrinsic value it bore when it was first fixed; yet this grievance remains unremedied in some of the wealthiest countries of Europe, even in those where the greatest attention is paid in other particulars to the rights of mankind. But weak as the impression may be which the soldiers hardships make on the cold heart of the politician, one would naturally expect they should meet with sympathy in the breasts of their own officers; the men best acquainted with their situation, whom they are constantly serving and obeying, who are acting in the same cause, and exposed to the same dangers, though not to the same hardships with themselves. It is natural to imagine, that, independent of more generous motives, their own interest, and the idea of self-preservation, would prompt officers to behave with mildness, at least with equity, to the soldiers under their command. How many officers have been rescued from death or captivity by the grateful attachment and intrepidity of the soldiers? I myself, sir, once lay on the field severely wounded, when, in the midst of general confusion, officers and men flying promiscuously, I was carried to a place of security by two soldiers, at the infinite hazard of their own lives. From one of those, indeed, I might naturally have expected some exertion in my favour; he was a Castilian, born on my own estate: but I had no claim on the other, except as an officer who had always behaved equitably to him in common with the rest of my company;—he was an Irishman.

'Had I treated him with caprice or ill-nature, would this foreigner, or even would my own countryman, have made such a generous exertion to preserve my life? No, sir; if they had refrained from giving me a fresh wound as they fled past me, which soldiers are not unapt to do to cruel officers, they certainly would at least have consulted their own safety by continuing their flight, and left me to be trampled to death by the enemy's cavalry, as I certainly must have been, had not these two soldiers removed me from the spot on which I lay.

'But waving every consideration derived from the ideas of personal safety, there is another kind of selfishness which might induce officers to behave well to soldiers; that is, the pleasure of alleviating, in many respects, the unavoidable hardships of our fellow-creatures, and the consciousness of being loved by those around us.'

At this part of the general's remonstrance, Zeluco raised his eyes mechanically with that kind of stare which a man gives when he hears what he thinks a very extraordinary proposition.

'It is true, sir, I assure you,' continued the Castilian; 'next to the approbation of his own conscience, nothing is so grateful to the heart of man as the love and esteem of mankind. In my mind, he is an object of compassion, in whatever situation of life he may be placed, who is not sensible of this from his own experience; and surely no man can be tolerably happy, who thinks himself the object of their hatred.

'We all know, gentlemen,' continued he, turning a moment from Zeluco to the other officers, 'that the love of soldiers, important as it is to those who command them, may be acquired on easier terms than that of any other set of men; because the habit of obedience, in which *they* are bred, inclines them to *respect* their officers; unbiassed equity in the midst of the strictest discipline commands their *esteem*, and the smallest mark of kindness secures their *gratitude* and attachment. I have ever endeavoured to preserve a steady and regular discipline among the

troops I have had the honour of commanding: yet I have the happiness to believe, that I am more loved than feared by those among them who have had the best opportunity of knowing me.—One of the greatest pleasures I ever enjoyed (I see some here who were with me on that occasion) was, in overhearing an advanced guard of soldiers talk affectionately of me, when they knew not I was near them: I will own to you, sir, it came over my heart like the sweetest music: and if I thought myself the object of the secret execrations of the men under my command, it would spoil the harmony of my life, and jar my whole soul out of tune.

'Signior Zeluco, what I have heard of your behaviour to the soldiers, I am willing to impute to a misplaced zeal for the service. It is difficult to believe, that a man of birth and education could have been prompted to the severities you have exercised by other motives.

'This consideration, joined to the regard I have for the recommendation of my old friend, your uncle, have weighed with me, in not subjecting certain parts of your conduct to the judgment of a court-martial.

'With respect to the soldier whom you confined so long and so improperly in irons, you certainly treated him from the beginning with too much severity. The natural awkwardness of a recruit is to be corrected gradually, and with gentleness; severity confounds him, and increases the evil that is to be remedied. To give way to anger and passion on such an occasion is inconsistent with the dignity which an officer ought to preserve before the men, and is always attended with injustice. As for this man's answer to your very intemperate menace, although a soldier under arms ought not to make any reply to an officer, yet, all the circumstances being weighed, what he said was excusable; to endeavour to torture it into mutiny would be absurd.

'You ought to remember, gentlemen, that as military discipline looks to the general tendency and remote consequences of things, more than to their intrinsic criminal-

ity, many actions are treated as crimes by the military laws which in themselves are innocent or frivolous. And when a soldier, irritated by undeserved insult, overleaps subordination, and repels the wanton tyranny of an officer, however he may be condemned by the unrelenting laws of discipline, he will be absolved by the natural feelings of the human heart, which revolts at oppression; nor will he appear, even in the eyes of those who think his punishment expedient, an object either of contempt or aversion. But when an officer, armed with the power, and intrenched within the lines of discipline, indulges unmanly passion, or private hatred, against an unprotected and unresisting soldier, in what light can this officer appear, either in his own eyes, or in those of others?

'Signor Zeluco, I have thought proper to explain my sentiments to you thus fully before these gentlemen, who have been witnesses to your conduct since you first joined the regiment, and whom I do not think entirely free from blame for not making me acquainted with it. I have only to add, that the consideration which prevents my laying the whole before a court-martial, cannot operate a second time. I hope, sir, that for your own sake you will keep this in your remembrance, that while I insist upon all the troops under my command performing their duty with punctuality, I will not permit the poorest sentinel to be treated with injustice.

'The soldier whom you used so harshly may still appeal, if he pleases, to a court-martial; it will be prudent in you to find means to prevent him.'

Having said this, the general dismissed the company. Zeluco made a present to the soldier more than sufficient to satisfy him. And his expectation of sudden promotion in the army being greatly damped by the general's harangue, he formed the resolution of quitting the road to military renown, and of turning into a path more agreeable to his talents, and from which he hoped to reap greater advantage.

CHAPTER X.

Gratitude to a Friend.—Curiosity in a Maid.

ZELUCO had formed an acquaintance with a Spanish gentleman, to whom he had brought a recommendatory letter from his uncle at Madrid; and from whom he received daily marks of attention and civility. As this gentleman, though of but a moderate fortune, lived in a most hospitable style, and was of a character less reserved than the Spaniards in general are, Zeluco found him a very convenient acquaintance, and cultivated his good opinion with such assiduity, that he gained at last his entire confidence. In the course of their intimacy, the Spaniard informed Zeluco that he had long paid his addresses to a widow lady possessed of a very valuable estate of her own, and a large sum of money secured in mortgages on some of the best estates in the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola: that she had, on his first making proposals, protested in positive terms, according to the established custom of widows, against ever entering into a second matrimonial engagement; but that of late he had observed with much satisfaction, that her objections became gradually weaker, both in their nature and in the manner in which they were urged; and that he now had good hopes of their being soon removed altogether: that as her great fortune was entirely in her own power, as she had no children, and was in herself a woman of a good disposition and of a cheerful temper, he expected many advantages and much domestic happiness from the union.

Zeluco was introduced to this lady's acquaintance by her lover; and having made a cautious and minute inquiry into the state of her finances, he was satisfied that they rather surpassed than fell short of the account he had received of them; and from that moment formed the design of supplanting his unsuspicious friend.

But he did not think it prudent to pay his court avowedly to a woman who was almost betrothed to another;

and that other, a person from whom he received hourly civilities, and whom he acknowledged to be his friend.

He assailed her, however, with the eloquence of glances and sighs; which, while he *affected* to conceal them from her, he took particular care should not escape her observation; and as often as they seemed to be discovered he endeavoured to blush, and then assumed an air of uneasiness and confusion.

When he was in her company, which happened as often as he decently could, he added to this the most obsequious approbation of whatever she said; and the general tendency of his discourse, though often addressed to others, was to adopt and illustrate those sentiments and opinions which he knew to be hers.

By these means, aided by the graces of his person, he gradually made advances on the heart of the widow; and in a short time gained a decided preference over her old lover. But although this skilful engineer was fully sensible of the impression which he made, he declined sending an open summons, trusting that his masked battery of sighs and glances would extort from the fortress itself a proposal of surrender. To hasten which, he took care to engage the widow's confidential maid in his interest, by ordering his own valèt to make assiduous love to her, and instructing him in what manner to proceed after he had gained her heart.

The attentive valet began his operations without loss of time; having spent a few days in general courtship, he told her that he had something of an important and very secret nature to communicate to her private ear.

'To my private ear!' cried the maid.

'Assuredly, my dear,' said the valet, 'to your's, and to no other person's.'

This so mightily raised the curiosity of the maid, that, she gave him a rendezvous in a grove of her mistress's garden; merely, as she herself repeatedly assured him, to know what this important matter was; for she owned

it was beyond the compass of her power to divine what it could be.

The valet gained her heart as he had been ordered and in the intervals of his own successful passion he observed the other instructions of his master.

CHAPTER XI.

Rien ne pese tant qu'un secret;
Le porter loin est difficile aux dames;
Et je sai meme sur ce fait
Bon nombre d'hommes qui sont femmes.

LA FONTAINE.

AFTER having lived for some time together in a state of mutual happiness, the valet presented himself one day to his mistress with every appearance of sorrow; this tender-hearted maiden (for she had never been married) affectionately inquired into the cause of his grief. The valet answered, 'That it was all on account of his unhappy master, who, from being the most cheerful of mankind, was of late become the most dejected and heart-broken.'

'Have you no notion,' said the maid, 'what has occasioned such a melancholy change?'

'No notion!' replied the valet; 'I know but too well what has brought it about.'

'And pray, for goodness sake, what can it be?' said the maid impatiently.

'That,' repled the valet, 'is what no earthly consideration will make me ever divulge.'

'No!' cried the maid, 'and for what reason?'

'Because,' said the valet, 'I have promised never to mention it to any human creature.'

'I insist upon knowing it immediately,' said the maid.

'I beg you will not,' cried the valet; 'it would be horrid in me to divulge a secret with which I have been intrusted—my master never would forgive me.'

'Your *mistress* never will forgive you, if you do not,' said the maid.

'Only consider what you require of me,' rejoined the valet; 'to break my trust! To press such a thing is an attack on my honour.'

'Well,' exclaimed the maid, 'have you not made an attack on *my honour?* Is all your pretended love come to this? To refuse the *first* favour she ever asked, to her who has granted you the *last*. Was there ever such ingratitude. O! I shall burst with vexation.—Yes,' continued she, weeping, 'if you do not immediately tell me the cause of your master's misery, you will render me ten thousand times more miserable than he.'

There was no resisting such a rational and pathetic remonstrance. The valet unfolded the whole mystery. 'His poor master was desperately and hopelessly in love with her mistress; for knowing that she was in some measure engaged to a friend of his own, he was a man of such delicate honour that he would pine away his very soul in secret, rather than interfere with a friend; that he ate little or no food, never slept a wink, sighed from morning to night: and as for my own part,' continued the valet, 'how shall I be able to support the loss of such a generous master! for he is the most liberal of men; one who thinks he never can sufficiently recompense those who do him even the smallest service.'

The maid expressed her admiration at the account he gave of his master, particularly at his neither eating nor sleeping; she likewise approved very much of his sighing night and day for love. She knew that such things were common formerly, for in the course of her studies she had read of them in books. 'But I fear,' said she, 'they are not much the fashion among lovers of the present age. Yet I must confess,' continued she, 'that your master is to blame for not acquainting my mistress with his passion.'

'He never will,' replied the valet; 'nothing will ever prevail on him to come in competition with his friend; he will rather pine away his very soul in secret.'

'He is very much to blame,' said the maid; 'for allow me to put a case which has this moment come into my head.—If so be that many men were to act in the same manner, it would be a great hardship on the fair sex; for many of them might accept a man who was not very agreeable to them, while others, whom they would have preferred, are pining away their souls in secret; for if they always pine in secret, how is a woman to know that they are pining at all? And a prudent woman,' continued the maid, 'will secure what she can get, rather than run the risk of getting nothing. It is therefore a clear case, that your master should speak out, and acquaint my mistress with his love, and who knows,' added she, with a significant nod to the valet, 'what may happen, since your master is so generous a man?'

'Generous!' cried the valet, 'you can have no notion how generous he is; nobody ever did him a service without being rewarded far beyond their expectations; but as for speaking of his passion to your mistress, it is what he never will do:—but no doubt it might be happy for both, that she knew how much he loves her; for I confess, I tremble for his life; for rather than offer himself in competition with his friend, he will conceal the flame which consumes him within his own breast.'

'Jesu Maria!' cried the maid, 'conceal a flame within his breast!'

'Yes,' continued the valet, 'and sigh his soul to the last puff unobserved, like the dying flame in a dark lantern.'

The maid burst into tears at this affecting image; and after endeavouring to comfort her, he begged of her never to mention, to any of the human race, what he had told her,—but particularly not to her mistress.

'I am sure,' replied the maid, 'my mistress would not deserve to be numbered among the human race, if she allowed so faithful a lover to expire in any such manner.'

'It would, indeed, be ten thousand pities,' said the

valet; 'but you will never give a hint of what I have told you.'

'I give a hint!' exclaimed the maid; 'I will be cut into ten thousand pieces first.'

So saying, she left him, and went with all possible speed, and informed her mistress, as the valet expected, of all he had said; ending the narrative, which the lady listened to with evident satisfaction, by declaring, 'That in the whole course of her life, she had never heard of such an ardent lover as Signor Zeluco.'

'Ardent!' said the mistress; 'what can you know of his ardour?'

'All that I know,' replied the maid, 'is that he carries a flame in his breast; and is, besides, a much handsomer man than Don Lopes.'

'Thy head,' said the mistress, 'is always running on beauty—a prudent woman will think of more essential qualities.'

'To be sure, every prudent woman, like your ladyship, will do so,' replied the maid; 'but there is no judging for certain but by experience;—though in all appearance, Signor Zeluco has every essential quality as perfect as Don Lopes, and is a handsomer man into the bargain.'

'Well, but,' said the widow, smiling, 'you would not have me to go and court this handsome man of your's—would you?'

'No; assuredly,' said the maid; 'I am always for supporting the dignity of our own sex;—but I would have you to dismiss Don Lopes.'

'What, before Signor Zeluco makes any proposal?' cried the widow.

'Yes,' said the maid, 'he will not dip an oar into the water till Don Lopes is dismissed;—this I know from good authority, that till you have given a final answer to Don Lopes, Signor Zeluco, rather than speak, will expire.'

'Expire!' cried the widow.

'Yes, indeed, madam, I am assured that Signor Zeluco is that kind of man.'

'He is a very extraordinary kind of man indeed then,' resumed she.

'That I am informed for certain he is,' said the maid; 'for although he is languishing for love of your ladyship, yet rather than open his mouth to you on the subject, he will certainly die.'

'Die! nonsense,' cried the widow.

'Yes, die,' cried the maid; 'and what is worse, die in a dark lantern; at least, I am told that is what he is in danger of.'

CHAPTER XII.

Heroic Love.

ALTHOUGH the widow affected to laugh at the maid, and despise her advice; yet she had for some time been in expectation of a declaration of love from Zeluco; and having gathered from her maid's discourse what the obstacle was which prevented it, after consulting her pillow, she determined to overleap the barriers of female delicacy, and encourage him to a declaration of sentiments which were highly agreeable to her.

Zeluco paid her a visit at a time when she was disengaged from all other company, and she had previously given orders that none should be admitted while he remained with her.

When they met, the lady's countenance was dressed in smiles, and her whole manner announced the most encouraging frankness. But on the brow of Zeluco, care and solicitude seemed to sit brooding, and the sighs of despondency burst, as it were, involuntary from his bosom.

They conversed for some time on indifferent subjects, but Zeluco displayed such absence of mind, and made so many pauses of melancholy import, that the conversation was continually interrupted.

'I fear,' said the lady tenderly, 'that some secret care preys upon your mind.'

Zeluco, heaving as profound a sigh as ever was hove on any theatre, threw up his eyes and was silent.

'Why will you not disclose the cause of your affliction?' said the widow.

'Alas! madam, the cause of my misery cannot be removed; my complaint is past remedy; why, therefore, should I disquiet others with sorrows which are peculiar to myself; especially, why should I disquiet those whose happiness it is my ardent wish, and would be my greatest pride, to promote?'

'I know not who have the honour to be of that number,' said the widow, with diffidence.

'My most fervent desire, madam, would be to promote the happiness of ———' Here he hesitated, and seemed in a state of trembling confusion.

'The happiness of whom?' cried the impatient widow.

'Alas! madam, do not insist upon my disclosing sentiments which I have so long strove to suppress, and still wish to conceal; sentiments condemned by the voice of friendship, though inspired by the purest love; sentiments which, if known, might render me odious and criminal in your eyes.'

'I am convinced you labour under a mistake, sir,' said the widow; 'pray tell me therefore whose happiness it is that you wish so earnestly to promote.'

'The happiness of the most deserving and most amiable of her sex,' cried Zeluco, fixing his eyes ardently on the widow;—'but this blessing never will be in my power.'

'If I am the person you allude to,' said the lady, throwing her eyes modestly on the ground, and blushing with all her might, 'I must acknowledge that it is in *your* power more than in that of any man alive.'

There was no resisting a hint so directly favourable as this. 'Angels and saints of heaven,' cried Zeluco, 'am

I awake, or am I deluded by a dream of felicity !'——— And so he poured out a rhapsody extremely insipid in itself, but mightily relished by the hearer. This was followed by a long conversation, in which the lady removed all the scruples of Zeluco, by assuring him of what he was convinced was not strictly true, that she never had any intention of giving her hand to Don Lopes; and that although he, Zeluco, were entirely out of the question, she never would: that the gentleman was much mistaken if he had entertained any such hopes; and she would seize the first opportunity that offered to inform him of this.—Zeluco begged that, if she was resolved on that measure, she would execute it in the least offensive manner possible. An advice which she promised to follow.

In the next conversation which Don Lopes had with the widow, while, inspired by the most flattering hopes, he began to urge his suit, and was endeavouring to remove those objections which the lady had formerly stated against a woman's engaging in a second marriage; an expression fell from her which did not so much imply a reluctance to marriage as to choosing him for her husband. On his appearing surprised, and humbly requiring an explanation; the lady acknowledged, that the prejudice she had so strongly entertained against a second marriage was now effaced by his very judicious arguments, many of which would never have occurred to her uninstructed judgment, and she should always retain a grateful sense of the pains he had taken to free her mind from an error so prejudicial to society. But, at the same time, after a thousand apologies, she confessed, that, although she was convinced of the propriety of her marrying, yet she had not that degree of love for him which, in her opinion, was necessary to constitute happiness in the marriage state. That she should be extremely glad to remain on a footing of friendship with him, (for she really had a high esteem for his character), but unfortunately not that *passionate ardour of love*, which alone

could insure mutual felicity to a married couple; and, therefore, on his own account, as well as her's, she begged he would desist from his suit.

The gentleman thanked her for her esteem, and the obliging attention she displayed for his felicity; hinted, that if she had been equally explicit sooner, it would have saved both herself and him some trouble, and begged to know whether he might be permitted to ask, if the sentiments she expressed proceeded entirely from her indifference to *him*, or were in part owing to a *passionate ardour of love* for some other man?

After throwing her eyes on the ground, and covering her face with her handkerchief, the lady declared, that, contrary to her wishes, and without any design on his part, she felt such an attachment to his friend Zeluco, as rendered it highly improper for her to give her hand to another; particularly, she was incapable of such injustice to a person for whom she had so high a regard as the gentleman to whom she then spoke.

'You are certain that Zeluco is unacquainted with the preference which you give him?' said the gentleman.

'I know not what he may suspect,' answered the blushing widow; 'I only know that he never explained himself to me, nor, I am convinced, ever will, whatever his sentiments may be, while it is believed that you continue your pursuit.'

'My pursuit terminates here, madam; and I will, myself, inform Zeluco of his good fortune,' continued the generous Spaniard; 'since I cannot have the happiness I expected myself, I will not stand in the way of another whom you prefer, and who very possibly may render you happier than I could.'

This well-meaning and candid man acquainted Zeluco, according to his declaration, of the widow's sentiments.

The consummate hypocrite expressed great surprise and concern at the intelligence, and affected infinite reluctance, in accepting of a piece of good fortune, however

desirable in itself, which had behallen him, at the expense of so dear a friend. All this affectation and mummery was in due time overcome, and Zeluco's nuptials with the widow were celebrated in form.

CHAPTER XIII.

On ne trouve guere d'ingrats, tant qu'on est en état de faire du bien.
ROCHEFOUCAULT.

As the gentleman who so generously had quitted his claim had never, during his courtship, shewn any anxiety on the subject of settlements, Zeluco also waved all discussion of that kind, that he might appear equally disinterested. He knew, however, that by the lady's will, as it then stood, her fortune, independent of children, would devolve to one of her relations. This destination he thought he would prevail upon her at his leisure to alter, and as the lady was near fifty years of age, and never had a child by her former husband, or, as far as he knew, by any other person, Zeluco thought there was little danger of his being shoved out of her fortune, either by her relations, or his own offspring. The lady herself, indeed, did not look upon her having a pretty numerous posterity in such a desperate light as it appeared to others; for in her latest settlement, which was not of an old date, she had specified the provision of her second begotten son or daughter, her third, her fourth, and so on, and with the most laudable and truly maternal solicitude she had amply provided for a dozen of her expected progeny.

Zeluco appeared equally obsequious after marriage as before, making every effort in his power to engross and secure the affections of his spouse, who, on her part, became every day more doatingly fond of him; and at length, all the regard, kindness, and friendship, she formerly felt for other relations and connections, were totally effaced, and the whole affections of her heart centered in her beloved husband.

One idea, however, intruded into her mind, and disturbed her happiness; this arose from her husband's profession, which she dreaded might occasion a separation between them, and expose him to the hardships and dangers of war. She often conjured him, therefore, with all the eloquence of love, to abandon a situation which kept her in perpetual alarm, and embittered the sweetest enjoyments of her life.

Zeluco disliked the profession as much as his lady, and was fully resolved to quit it, but he was equally resolved to make his yielding to her entreaties subservient to another plan which now occupied his thoughts.

He always replied to her endearing solicitations on that head with every appearance of grateful acknowledgment, expressing at the same time the greatest reluctance to give up a profession of which he was passionately fond, and in which he expected to obtain glory and preferment.

This affecting contest was often renewed: on one occasion, Zeluco, exaggerating the advantages he might derive from continuing in the service, said, that if he should be as fortunate as some other officers, he might be enabled one day to redeem the estate of his ancestors, and appear with splendour and reputation in his native country. He probably expected, that in consequence of this hint she would have put it in his power immediately, by making over her fortune to him:—but whether, from not fully comprehending the import of what he said, or from some remains of prudence, she made no direct answer; and her fears respecting her husband's profession seemed to relapse into a slumber, when they were suddenly roused by her receiving an anonymous letter from one who pretended great anxiety for her happiness, and at the same time informing her, that war would very soon be declared; that her husband's regiment was destined for immediate service, in a secret expedition, of which he himself had already received intimation, though out of tenderness he concealed it from her.

This alarming news at once awakened her apprehen-

sions, and lulled her prudence. She tenderly expostulated with her husband for concealing intelligence of such infinite importance to her peace of mind. Without absolutely admitting the truth of her information, he used it as a fresh argument against the propriety of his quitting the army. 'If he had hesitated, even in the time of peace, how could he in honour agree to it on the eve of a war?' This convinced her of the truth of the intelligence.

'But you have not heard,' cried the half-distracted woman, 'that war is yet declared.'

'With whatever certainty it may be expected, it assuredly is not actually declared,' replied Zeluco; 'if that were the case, even you, my dearest love, could no longer wish that I should leave the army; nor could I after that allow of any entreaty on the subject.'

'Well, thank heaven, it is not yet too late,' cried she; and immediately leaving Zeluco, she ordered an irrevocable deed to be made out, by which her whole fortune, real and personal, was transferred to her husband. This she shewed him, telling him at the same time, that she would deliver it into his possession the moment that he resigned his commission. After the highest expression of admiration, at what he termed her generosity of soul, and some very heroic sentiments denoting the reluctance with which he had sacrificed the hopes of military glory, he concluded, by repeating a line from a Spanish poet, equivalent to this from Pope's Eloisa:

Fame, wealth, and honour, what are ye to love?

This scrap of poetry, though not very applicable on such an occasion, was heard with rapture, and considered by the enamoured lady as exceedingly in point.

Having obtained liberty to resign, he quitted the army, to the great joy of his lady, and of the regiment to which he belonged.

CHAPTER XIV.

Proprium humani ingenii est, odisse quem læseris.
TACIT.

THE heroic mark of love above mentioned was the last that Zeluco was solicitous of receiving from his lady; for he seemed ever after very willing to dispense with all indications of her passion, and his expressions of affection towards her diminished in their energy from this period. She, at first with gentleness, and afterwards with a mixture of acrimony, remonstrated with him on this alteration. But it has been observed, that complaints and remonstrances seldom prove restoratives to a languid love. In the best and mildest dispositions they do no good, in acrimonious dispositions they exasperate the disease.

Zeluco bore the murmurings of his wife from the beginning with but an ill-dissembled patience, became more and more morose and sulky as they were continued, and his behaviour terminated in avowed contempt and open abuse.

The unhappy woman finding herself thus neglected, insulted, and despised by the person on whom she had fixed her affections and bestowed her whole fortune, gradually sunk into despondency, and after enduring all the bitterness of self-reproach, she died at the end of two years.

Disappointment and disquietude had attended Zeluco through the whole of his life, notwithstanding the great acquisition of fortune he derived from his marriage; even his matrimonial state had been embittered with continual chagrin. This was the natural effect of his own vicious conduct; yet by a partiality of self-deceit, which is very common, he always imputed his missing of happiness to other causes: few people blame themselves, while it is in the power of self-love to twist the charge against others. All the discontent and fretfulness which Zeluco experienced during the lifetime of his wife, he thought origin-

ated in the ill-humour and bad temper of that unhappy woman.

When he was freed therefore from what he considered as the only obstruction to his happiness, he expected that what he had hitherto pursued without attaining was at last within his reach.

But to render his felicity more certain and permanent, he thought it necessary to bring his estate to the highest pitch of improvement; after which he proposed to return to Europe, and there in splendour and magnificence enjoy every pleasure that his heart could desire.

In the prosecution of this plan he laboured with such assiduity and impatience as kept himself in everlasting fretfulness, and proved fatal to several of his slaves, some of whom expired under the exertions he forced them to make, and others under the punishments he inflicted for the smallest remissness or neglect.

Zeluco was now in that situation in which the understanding cannot improve, and the disposition is the most likely to degenerate; avoiding and being avoided by every person of a liberal and independent mind; living almost constantly on his own estate with a set of people over whom he had unlimited power; seeing no person whose character he much respected, or whose censure he so much dreaded as to put him on his guard against the overflowings of passion, or make him check the impulses of caprice, of course he became every day more unreasonable, passionate, and cruel; and at length was unable to hear with patience the most candid and rational remonstrance, flying into violent fits of rage on the most trivial occasions; and when his domestics had the good fortune to execute his orders with such precision and rapidity as left him not the least pretence for blame, he then turned his rancour on the climate and soil, the vicissitudes of the weather, bursting into ridiculous fits of passion at the commonest and most inevitable occurrences.

The daily habit which this odious man thus acquired of tormenting himself, would have afforded satisfaction to all

who were witnesses to it, had it not been accompanied with the diabolical propensity to harass and torment all those unfortunate creatures whom Providence, for reasons we cannot penetrate, subjected to his power.

When a man of a good disposition is of a peevish, fretful, and capricious temper, which unfortunately is sometimes the case, the uneasiness which he needlessly gives himself is lamented by those who are acquainted with his entire character. But when a villain is the slave of caprice, and of course a self-tormentor, his misery affords satisfaction and amusement to all who know him. And although they durst not display it openly, yet it undoubtedly gave secret satisfaction to every one of this wretched man's slaves, to be witnesses to the disquietude and misery of their persecutor.

Zeluco having been represented as avaricious as well as cruel, it may be said that the first of those dispositions would prove a restraint upon the last; and that the suggestions of self-interest would prevent his pushing cruelty the length of endangering the lives of his slaves.

It is a common argument against the necessity of new laws for the protection of slaves, that they need no protection from a just and humane master, because he will never injure them; nor from a master of an opposite character, because his own interest will be their protection: but let it be remembered, that men who are not naturally compassionate, who are devoid of religious impressions, and in the habit of giving vent to every gust of ill-humour, are apt, in the violence of rage, to become deaf to the voice of common sense and interest, as well as of justice and mercy. An unfortunate gamester throws the cards into the fire, and regrets that they have not feeling; a choleric man breaks and destroys the furniture of his house, however valuable; and how often do we see men in an absurd rage abuse their most serviceable cattle? But a thousand causes, which must occur to every one, expose *human creatures* to the vindictive rage of ill-tempered proprietors in a much greater degree than inanimate things or the brute

creation ever can be. And we find in fact, that cruel and passionate masters, however interested in other respects, do gratify their ill-humour against their most valuable slaves at the expense of their interest.

It will be alleged, that in all the Christian colonies the slaves are so far protected from the injustice of their master, that none of them can be condemned capitally, but after trial in a court of justice. Long experience has made it clear, however, that the proprietors of land in those colonies, Christians as they are, shew little disposition to listen to the complaints of slaves, or interfere with each other respecting the manner in which slaves are treated; and when it is whispered about, that a slave has expired under the lash, or has died in consequence of the arbitrary punishment of his master, people in general are not fond of the trouble of collecting proofs, or appearing in the character of accusers; particularly when the delinquent is a white man, of interest perhaps in the colony, and the sufferer a black slave. Besides, there may in many instances be a full conviction of the crime, and yet the criminal may not be deemed within the grasp of those vague laws which the policy of Europe has thought sufficient for the protection of slaves from the cruelty of their masters. The law may direct, that a master shall not order more than a limited number of stripes to be inflicted for any fault that his slave commits. But if the law requires no proof of the fault, except the allegation of the master, what security has the slave that he shall not be punished unjustly, or that his master shall not, as often as he pleases, repeat the punishment at such intervals as keep him out of the reach of the law? it must be owned that the slave has no security from such abuses, which is tantamount to putting it in the master's power to torture his slaves to death with impunity. Such laws are no safeguard, but rather a mockery of the unhappy race of men they pretend to protect.

This unlimited power, which is left in the hands of the masters, has a bad effect both on the slave and the mas-

ter. It tends at once to render the first more wretched, and the second more wicked. How many men have, for a great part of their lives, supported the character of well-disposed good-natured people; and on going from Europe to the West Indies, and becoming proprietors of slaves, have gradually grown ill-tempered, capricious, haughty, and cruel. Even Zeluco, though of a capricious, violent, and selfish disposition, was not naturally cruel; this last grew upon him in consequence of unlimited power. His severity to the soldiers arose from a desire of gaining the favour of the commander, by rendering the men under his immediate command more expert than others. In pushing this point he disregarded, indeed, the sufferings of the men; because his excessive selfishness engrossed all his feelings, and left him quite indifferent to the feelings of others; he still was not positively cruel. Independent of passion or rage, he had no satisfaction in giving pain; he was only unconcerned whether they suffered or not. And afterwards, when he became the absolute master of a great number of unfortunate creatures, whom he considered as his property, he thought he had a right to make the most of them. And he was informed by those who have heads for such a calculation, and hearts to act in consequence of it, that to force slaves to their utmost exertions, and purchase new ones as the old expire, is, upon the whole, more economical than to treat them with a certain degree of gentleness, and oblige them to no more labour than is proportioned to their strength, although, by this means, the expense of new purchases would be less considerable, and less frequent. A person who passed for a very sensible man, who formerly kept an inn on one of the great posting roads in England, and was at this time a considerable proprietor of land in one of the West India islands, had assured him, that he had found this to hold with regard to post-horses; and the argument was equally just when applied to slaves. Zeluco, therefore, had originally no direct intention of injuring his slaves; his view was simply to improve his e-

states to the utmost; but in the execution of this as *their* exertions did not keep pace with *his* impat he found it necessary to quicken them by an unrem use of the whip. This produced discontent, mur sulkiness, sometimes upbraidings on their parts; threats, and every kind of abuse on his: he saw l in all their looks, he presumed revenge in all their h he became more and more severe, and treated them imagined they wished to treat him, and as he was c ous he deserved to be treated by them; at length l rived at that shocking point of depravity, to have a tification in punishing, independent of any idea of u or advantage to himself.

This, unfortunately for a large proportion of man is often the progress of unlimited power, and the which it too frequently produces on the human cl ter.

If the reign of many European proprietors of e in the West Indies were faithfully recorded, it is to be feared, that the capricious cruelties which di those of Caligula and Nero would not seem so incr as they now do. And perhaps no memoirs could be affecting to a candid and humane mind, than th many negroes, from the time of their being brought the coast of Guinea, till their death in the West I The fate of one of Zeluco's slaves, called Hanno, connected with our purpose, may, without improp be mentioned here.

CHAPTER XV.

——— Merciful Heaven!
Thou, rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt,
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak,
Than the soft myrtle! O, but man! proud man!
Drest in a little brief authority;
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence—like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastick tricks before high Heaven,
As make the angels weep.———

SHAKESPEARE.

HANNO the slave, mentioned at the end of the foregoing chapter, allowed symptoms of compassion, perhaps of indignation, to escape from him, on hearing one of his brother slaves ordered to be punished unjustly. Zeluco having observed this, swore that Hanno should be the executioner, otherwise he would order him to be punished in his stead.

Hanno said, he might do as he pleased; but as for himself he never had been accustomed to that office, and he would not begin by exercising it on his friend. Zeluco, in a transport of rage, ordered him to be lashed severely, and renewed the punishment at *legal* intervals so often, that the poor man was thrown into a languishing disease, which confined him constantly to his bed.

Hanno had been a favourite servant of his lady's before her marriage with Zeluco; he was known to people of all ranks on the island, and esteemed by all who knew him. The Irish soldier who had carried the commanding officer from the field, as was related above, was taken into that gentleman's service some time after, and remained constantly in his family from that time; this soldier had long been acquainted with Hanno, and had a particular esteem for him. As soon as he heard of his dangerous situation, he hastened to see him, carried him wine and other refreshments, and continued to visit and comfort him during his languishing illness. Perceiving

at last that there was no hope of his recovery, he thought the last and best office he could do him was to carry a priest to give him absolution and extreme unction.

As they went together, 'I should be very sorry, father,' said the soldier, 'if this poor fellow missed going to heaven; for, by Jesus, I do not believe there is a worthier soul there, be the other who he pleases.'

'He is a black,' said the priest, who was of the order of St. Francis.

'His soul is whiter than a skinned potatoe,' said the soldier.

'Do you know whether he believes in all the tenets of our holy faith?' said the priest.

'He is a man who was always ready to do as he would be done by,' replied the soldier.

'That is something,' said the capuchin, 'but not the most essential.'

'Are you certain that he is a Christian?'

'O, I'll be damned if he is not as pretty a Christian as your heart can desire,' said the soldier; 'and I'll give you a proof that will rejoice your soul to hear.—A soldier of our regiment was seized with the cramp in his leg when he was bathing; so he hallooed for assistance, and then went plump to the bottom like a stone. Those who were near him, Christians and all, swam away as fast as their legs could carry them, for they were afraid of his catching hold of them. But honest Hanno pushed directly to the place where the soldier had sunk, dived after him, and, without more ado, or so much as saying by your leave, seized him by the hair of the head, and hauled him ashore; where, after a little rubbing and rolling, he was quite recovered, and is alive and merry at this blessed moment. Now, my dear father, I think this was behaving like a good Christian, and what is much more, like a brave Irishman too.'

'Has he been properly instructed in all the doctrines of the catholic church?' said the priest.

'That he has,' replied the soldier; 'for I was after

instructing him yesterday myself; and as you had told me very often, that believing was the great point, I pressed that home. 'By Jesus,' says I, 'Hanno it does not signify making wry faces, but you must believe, my dear honey, as fast as ever you can, for you have no time to lose;'—and, poor fellow, he entreated me to say no more about it, and he would believe whatever I pleased.'

This satisfied the father. When they arrived at the dying man's cabin, 'Now, my dear fellow,' said the soldier, 'I have brought a holy man to give you absolution for your sins, and to show your soul the road to heaven; take this glass of wine to comfort you, for it is a hellish long journey.'

They raised poor Hanno, and he swallowed the wine with difficulty.

'Be not dismayed, my honest lad,' continued the soldier, 'for although it is a long march to heaven, you will be sure of glorious quarters when you get there. I cannot tell you exactly how people pass their time indeed; but by all accounts there is no very hard duty, unless it is that you will be obliged to sing psalms and hymns pretty constantly; that to be sure you must bear with: but then the devil a scoundrel who delights in tormenting his fellow-creatures will be allowed to thrust his nose into that sweet plantation; and so, my dear Hanno, God bless you; all your sufferings are now pretty well over, and I am convinced you will be as happy as the day is long, in the other world, all the rest of your life.'

The priest then began to perform his office;—Hanno heard him in silence,—he seemed unable to speak.

'You see, my good father,' said the soldier, 'he believes in all you say. You may now, without any farther delay, give him absolution and extreme unction, and every thing needful to secure him a snug birth in paradise.'

'You are fully convinced, friend,' said the priest, addressing the dying man in a solemn manner, 'that it is only by a firm belief in all the tenets of the holy ca-

tholic church, that——' 'God love your soul, my dear father,' interrupted the soldier, 'give him absolution in the first place, and convince him afterwards; for, upon my conscience, if you bother him much longer, the poor creature's soul will slip through your fingers.'

The priest, who was a good-natured man, did as the soldier requested.

'Now,' said the soldier, when the ceremony was over, 'now, my honest fellow, you may bid the devil kiss your b——de, for you are as sure of heaven as your master is of hell; where, as this reverend father will assure you, he must suffer to all eternity.'

'I hope he will not suffer so long,' said Hanno, in a faint voice; and speaking for the first time since the arrival of the priest.

'Have a care of what you say, friend,' said the priest, in a severe tone of voice; 'you must not doubt of the eternity of hell torments.—If your master goes once there, he must remain for ever.

'Then I'll be bound for him,' said the soldier, 'he is sure enough of going there.'

'But I hope in God he will not remain for ever,' said Hanno—and expired.

'That was not spoken like a true believer,' said the priest; 'if I had thought that he harboured any doubts on such an essential article, I should not have given him absolution.'

'It is lucky then that the poor fellow made his escape to heaven before you knew any thing of the matter,' said the soldier.

As the soldier returned home from Hanno's cabin, he met Zeluco, who, knowing where he had been, said to him, 'How is the d—d scoundrel now?'

'The d—d scoundrel is in better health than all who know him could wish,' replied the soldier.

'Why, they told me he was dying,' said Zeluco.

'If you mean poor Hanno, he is already dead, and on his way to heaven,' said the soldier; 'but as for

the scoundrel who murdered him, he'll be d—d before he gets there.'

LETTER XVI.

The Portuguese.

SOMETIME after this an occurrence took place which contributed more to render Zeluco less cruel to his slaves, than all the occasional attacks of compunction he felt for the death of Hanno, or than all the laws existing for the protection of negro slaves.

A rich Portuguese merchant, who had been settled for several years in the town of Havannah, had lately purchased an estate contiguous to that of Zeluco, who displayed a great inclination to cultivate his acquaintance by every kind of polite attention.

He frequently visited this merchant at his house in town, and offered him every kind of accommodation which his estate afforded, while the Portuguese was repairing a house on his new purchase for the reception of his family.

This very obliging behaviour of Zeluco seemed extraordinary to all those who knew him, and did not know that the merchant had a very handsome wife, who was fond of admiration, and not entirely free from coquetry.

Zeluco was much struck with her beauty, and used all his art to seduce her. She, on her part, although not entirely insensible to the charms of his face and person, was still more pleased with the eclat of having a man of his rank and fortune among the number of her admirers, and probably had no idea of ever making any other use of him. This lady was one of that class of women, who, being kept out of the way of temptation, and not vigorously attacked, will preserve the citadel of their virtue inviolate through life. She was apt, however, through vanity, to expose some of the outworks a little too much, which invited the attacks of the enemy; and although

she had no serious intention of ever formally surrendering the fort, she might possibly, through inattention, have allowed it to be surprised by a *coup de main.*

This lady was allured into a literary correspondence with Zeluco; at first on the most trifling subjects, and with the knowledge of her husband, to whom she shewed the billets: by degrees, however, it happened that she received some which she thought it unnecessary to communicae.

When the Portuguese brought his family to the house which he had repaired for their reception, Zeluco's intercourse with them was more frequent; and he often walked with the husband and wife in a sequestered field situated between his own house and that of her husband.

With some difficulty Zeluco at length prevailed on her to promise to meet him at this place towards the close of an evening, when he knew that her husband was engaged on business, which would necessarily detain him very late at the house of a gentleman who lived at a considerable distance.

From the time that Zeluco's correspondence with the lady became of a nature that she was rather shy of communicating, he always employed one particular slave, who, he imagined, was very cordially attached to him on account of a few indulgences which were granted to him previous to his being intrusted as an agent in this business.

In this conjecture, however, Zeluco was greatly mistaken; those slight favours had not eradicated from the man's mind that hatred and thirst for revenge which his master's former treatment had planted there.

Having come to the knowledge of the intended interview, he actually went and communicated all he knew to the husband, and returned rejoicing in the hope that his detested master would be assassinated that very night.

The lady however had accidentally seen this slave with her husband, and remarked, that from the time the slave

had spoken to him he was uncommonly thoughtful, morose, and agitated.

This led her to suspect that her husband was informed of the appointment, which she herself had already begun to repent of, and to hesitate about keeping.

After maturely weighing every circumstance, she determined to reveal to her husband what she thought he knew already.

She approached him therefore with an air of sincerity and contrition, saying, she was about to acquaint him with something which lay like a load upon her mind; that she had without scruple indulged an acquaintance with Signor Zeluco on account of the friendship he expressed for her husband, and his polite and obliging behaviour to herself; but that of late she had been surprised at a change in his manner of addressing her, which had terminated in a declaration of love; that she had been restrained from mentioning this to him sooner, being unwilling to give him uneasiness, and in hopes that from the manner in which she had received his declaration, he would not venture to renew it: but finding he persisted in his criminal assiduities, and had even gone the length of proposing that she should meet him privately and unknown to her husband, she thought herself bound in duty to conceal this behaviour of Zeluco's no longer; but to inform her husband of the whole.

Here she made a full stop;—and the husband perceiving that she meant to add nothing farther, said,—'Have you then informed me of the whole?'

She took heaven and earth to witness that she had.

'I did not hear you mention that you had promised to meet him,' said the husband.

The lady having recovered from a short embarrassment which this observation occasioned, replied, that she had been so much shocked with the proposal, and in such confusion, that she could not now recollect every word of what she had said: but that she had immediately left him; 'and whatever,' added she, 'has fallen from me,

which he may construe into a promise, I am conscious that I never should have gone near the place: of the truth of this, the information I have just given you is a sufficient proof; and if I have erred in concealing this matter so long, my error proceeded from a desire of preventing mischievous consequences, and out of tenderness to you.

The eloquence and fair pretences of the wife at length lulled the suspicions, and soothed the rage of her spouse with respect to herself; but his rancour against Zeluco remained in full force; and he threw out some threats of determined revenge. The wife was alarmed at this; for, although she was now resolved never to renew the intrigue, yet being conscious that she was in some degree to blame herself, she would willingly have prevented any mischief from befalling Zeluco; with this view she begged of her husband to overlook and despise the vain attempt which had been made, and leave the man to be punished by the mortification of disappointment, and the thoughts of the ridiculous light in which he must be conscious that he stood in the sight of both. The husband seemed to acquiesce in his wife's reasoning, but was determined to satisfy his revenge, a plan for which had already occurred to him.

Having persuaded his wife to go to bed earlier than usual, he dressed himself in her clothes, and throwing a white mantle over his head and shoulders, he slipt secretly out of his house, and with vindictive impatience walked to the place of rendezvous, where Zeluco had been waiting ever since the appointed moment.

With reviving joy, and by the glimmering light of the stars, he perceived a person in female attire approaching; and never doubting but it was the object of his wishes, he sprung forward with bounding velocity to meet her embrace; but at that instant his boiling blood was frozen on hearing the following words pronounced in an unnatural voice.—'The spirit of thy wife, she who fell a victim to thy perfidious cruelty, sends thee this.' On which the Portuguese plunged his stiletto into the breast of Ze-

luco, who immediately fell to the ground. The blow was given with good-will, the weapon rushed to the hilt, and the husband, convinced he had killed him, returned quietly to his own house, without his wife or any of the family having suspected that he had gone abroad.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Reward of Inhumanity.

Zeluco lay for some time on the ground, before he could recollect his terrified and scattered senses, and when he had in some degree recovered them, he was still unable to account for what had happened; sometimes he believed he had, in reality, seen the ghost of his deceased wife; and every circumstance of his ungrateful and perfidious conduct to her rushing on his memory, at a moment when he thought himself on the point of entering into a state of retribution, filled his mind with horror, and drove him to the brink of madness, from which perhaps he was saved by the quantity of blood he lost as he lay on the ground.

After passing several hours in a state of terror and remorse, the day beginning to dawn, he felt himself, though in a very weak condition, able to move; and at length, by the aid of a tree, at whose root he had fallen, he got upon his legs, and then attempted to move towards his own house, but soon, through faintness, sunk again to the ground, where he lay a considerable time longer in anguish, and despairing of relief. At length he saw some of his own slaves going to their morning labour.

In a tone very different from that in which he had been accustomed to address them, with whining humility he implored their succour, and begged they would have the goodness to carry him home.

At the sound of a human voice, expressive of distress, the slaves sprung eagerly to give their assistance; but

the instant they perceived it was their master, they stopped short with looks of abhorrence, as if it had not been a man but a wounded serpent which they saw writhing on the ground. Some turned aside, willing to be thought not to have observed him; others looked as if they enjoyed his agony; none offered him assistance; and it is not probable he would ever have reached his own house alive, had not one of his managers joined them. By his authority, he was at last carried thither, and the best medical and surgical aid was immediately sent for. The wound, upon the first examination, was thought mortal, and the universal satisfaction that this occasioned, as soon as it circulated among this detested man's slaves, was very evident, in spite of all their endeavours to controul their features and gestures. After languishing many weeks, however, the symptoms at last became favourable. During all the time in which it was doubtful whether he was to die or to live, the mind of the patient himself was hardly more cruelly agitated between fear and hope, than that of every slave, male and female, that belonged to him. And when he was pronounced to be out of danger, so fully was he loaded with their hatred, that the news produced a shock like that of electricity over his whole family. A number of slaves who happened to be at work in the garden, under the window of Zeluco's bedchamber, burst into a loud and uncontrollable howl of sorrow when his recovery was first announced to them.

The patient, alarmed at the sound, asked the physician, then sitting by his bedside, what it meant. The physician, who understood it no more than Zeluco, went to inquire, and having discovered the true source of the outcry, returned to the patient.

'What is the meaning of that howl?' said Zeluco; 'it seemed prompted by sorrow.'

'It proceeded from your slaves,' answered the physician; 'they are inquiring after your health.'

'Well, what then?' cried Zeluco.

'Why then,' answered the doctor, 'I suppose they

must have been told, by *mistake*, that you are worse, and likely to die. I have frequently known slaves express their grief in the same manner, when they were in danger of losing a good and humane master.'

The irony of this reply was wormwood to Zeluco; he fell into a gloomy fit of musing, and made no farther inquiry; neither did he, during his illness, or after his recovery, give any satisfactory account of the manner in which he had received the wound. Whatever his opinion might be, his fears were dissipated, and when he was able to weigh circumstances, he abstained from suggesting any suspicion against particular persons, or from making any investigation of the subject.

CHAPTER XVIII.

> Ye, who one bitter drop have drain'd
> From slav'ry's cup, with horror stain'd;
> Oh, let no fatal dregs be found,
> But dash her chalice to the ground.
>
> HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

For a considerable time after Zeluco was out of danger from his wound, and even after he began to walk abroad and resume the management of his affairs, he appeared more pensive than formerly; and although his thoughts seemed of a gloomy nature, yet he did not burst out into those violent fits of rage that had been customary with him before that accident. But the impression which it had made on his mind gradually diminished, and the sentiments of dread and remorse, which influenced his conduct for a time, wearing quite away, his former dispositions returned with his bodily health.

One day, as he was walking around his estate, with the physician already mentioned, who had called upon him on his return from visiting a patient, Zeluco gave pretty strong indications of a relapse into his former cruelty. The physician, who was a man of sense and humanity,

checked him, and expressed sentiments of compassion for the deplorable condition of the poor slaves.

'They are,' said Zeluco, 'the most villanous race alive.'

'They certainly are the most unfortunate,' said the physician.

'Let them perform their task as they ought,' replied the other, 'and they will not be unfortunate.'

'Why, it is not a slight misfortune,' said the doctor, 'to have *such* tasks to perform.'

'They are in a better situation than when they were in their own country.'

'That would be difficult to prove,' said the physician; 'but were it certain, I should think it a bad reason for treating them ill *here*, merely because they had been very ill treated *there*.'

'Negro slaves in general, all over the West Indies,' said Zeluco, 'are in a better condition than the common people in most countries of Europe. I have heard this asserted a thousand times.'

'If it were so,' said the physician, 'it would convey a dreadful idea of the condition of Europeans; but the thing is impossible, signor.'

'How impossible?' said Zeluco.

'Because, even if slaves were in general fed and clothed as well as you are yourself, yet while it is in the power of their master to impose what task he pleases, and punish their faults according to his humour, their condition must be infinitely worse than that of the cottager whom no body can abuse with impunity, and on whom the cheering spirit of liberty smiles as he reaps the fruit of his own industry.'

'You have certainly,' said Zeluco, 'borrowed that sentiment from an Englishman; some of those enthusiastic fools who are pleased to bear the insolence of mobs, and to sacrifice many of the conveniencies of life to the empty shade of freedom. Yet I have heard some, even of *their* West India proprietors, assert, that the negroes

of those islands were happier than the common labourers in England.'

'There is nothing too absurd for some men to assert,' said the physician, 'when they imagine their interest is concerned, or when it tends to justify their conduct. And were a law to be proposed now against the slave trade, or to render the condition of slaves more tolerable than it is at present, which is more likely to happen among the generous enthusiasts you mention than in any other country, it would perhaps be opposed by those very proprietors; but would you impute such opposition to tenderness to the slaves, and a humane wish to prevent their becoming as miserable as the common labourers in England?'

'I am told, however,' replied Zeluco, 'that your English in general are a most lugubrious race, and that there is much melancholy and discontent in their country with all their liberty.'

'I am told,' answered the physician, 'that there is much frost and cold in their country with all their sunshine, yet it has not been as yet clearly proved that the sun is the cause of either.'

'Well, but to return to the slaves,' said Zeluco; 'I do not perfectly understand what is your drift. Are they not my property? Have I not therefore a right to oblige them to labour for my profit?'

'With regard to the right which any man has to make a property of other men, and force them to labour as slaves solely for his benefit, I suspect it would be difficult for the greatest casuist that ever lived to make it out.'

'Why so?' replied Zeluco; 'I am assured that the slave trade is authorized by the bible. You are too sound a Christian, my good doctor, to controvert such authority.'

'Without considering whether those who furnished you with that argument did it with friendly or unfriendly intentions to the bible, signor, and without touching any

controvertible point in the scriptures, I will just observe, that charity, benevolence, and mercy, to our fellow-creatures, are not only authorized, but in the plainest unequivocal terms repeatedly ordained, in those writings. Let therefore the proprietors of slaves begin, by conforming their conduct to those injunctions, and then they may be allowed to quote scripture authority in support of such property.—*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.—Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye so to them.—Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*—These are the words of the Author of Christianity, whose whole life was a representation by action of his own precepts. Let the proprietors of estates in America and the West India islands consider how far their treatment of the negroes is agreeable to his doctrine and conduct; and their time will be better employed than in perverting detached passages of the bible, and endeavouring to press that which proclaimed peace on earth, and good-will to men, into the service of cruelty and oppression.'

'After all this fine sermon,' said Zeluco, 'you do not pretend to assert, that negroes are originally on a footing with white people; you will allow, I hope, that they are an inferior race of men.'

'I will allow,' replied the doctor, 'that their hair is short and ours is long, that their noses are flat and ours raised, that their skin is black and ours white; yet after all those concessions, I still have my doubts respecting our right to make them slaves.'

'Well, doctor,' said Zeluco, 'if you are determined to dispute our *right*, you must admit that we have the *power*, which is of much more importance.'

'While I admit *that*, signor, I most sincerely wish it were otherwise exercised.'

'How the devil would you have it exercised?'

'We should, in my opinion, exercise it with more moderation and lenity than some of us do,' said the physician.

'Lenity,' cried Zeluco, 'to a parcel of rascals, a gang of pilfering dogs, downright thieves! why, as often as they can, they steal the very provisions intended for my own table!'

'You cannot be much surprised at that, signor, when they are pinched with hunger.'

'You would have them pampered with delicacies forsooth, and never punished for any crime?'

'No, sir: but I would certainly allow them a sufficient quantity of wholesome food: and perceiving that all my neighbours are liable to commit faults, and being conscious of many failings in myself, I should not expect that poor untutored slaves were to be exempted from them, nor would I be relentless or unforgiving when they were discovered.'

'Po, poh—that is not the way to deal with negroes; nothing is to be made of them by lenity; they are the laziest dogs in the world; it is with the greatest difficulty sometimes that my manager can get them rouzed to their morning work.'

'Consider, signor, how natural it is after hard labour to wish to prolong the intervals of rest.'

'Rest!' cried Zeluco, angrily; 'they will have rest enough in their graves.'

'Well, signor,' replied the physician, shocked at this brutal remark, 'it would be fortunate for some people that they could promise themselves the same.'

'But, doctor,' said Zeluco, taking no notice of the last observation, 'can you really imagine that such treatment as you seem to recommend, would render slaves of equal benefit to the proprietors of West India estates?'

'Ay, signor,' replied the physician, 'that is coming directly to the point, which a man of sense would wish to investigate, leaving all the foreign matter concerning *religion* and *humanity*, which embarrass the argument, out of the question.'

'Well, considering the business with a view to a man's interest or profit only; long observation on the conduct

of others, with my own experience, which has been co siderable, convinces me that the master who treats h slaves with humanity and well-directed kindness, rea more benefit from their labour, than he who behaves i a contrary manner. There are many instances of ingr titude to be sure, but it is not natural to the human heart we naturally endear ourselves to those to whom we impa pleasure, and men in general serve with more alacrity an perseverance from love than fear. The instant that th eye of the manager is turned from the slave who serve from fear alone, his efforts relax; but the industry of hi who serves from attachment is continually prompted b the gratitude, and the regard for his master's interes which he carries in his breast.

'Besides, signor, how infinitely more pleasing is it t be considered as the distributor of happiness, than the in flictor of pain? What man, who has it in his power to b loved as a benefactor, would choose to be detested as a executioner, and see sorrow, terror, and abhorrence, i the countenances he daily beholds? Come, signor,' con tinued the physician, 'having, during the course of you illness, given you many advices for which you have pai me; pray accept of one from me gratis; you will rea much satisfaction from it, and it may prevent your bein exposed to new dangers, similar to that from which yo have with such difficulty escaped.—My advice is this.— Alter entirely your conduct towards your slaves; scor not those who demand justice and mercy; treat them wit much more indulgence, and sometimes with kindness; fo certainly that man is in a most miserable as well as dangerous situation, who lives among those who rejoice in hi sickness, howl with despair at his recovery, and whose only hope of tranquillity lies in their own death or in his.'

The physician having made this remonstrance, took hi leave. Zeluco remained musing for a considerable tim after he was gone; the result of his reflections was a determination to behave with more indulgence to his slaves, being alarmed by what was suggested, and convinced that

such conduct in future was highly expedient for his own personal security. Those resolutions were however very imperfectly kept. Indeed, Zeluco had already given so very bad an impression of his character, that a much more thorough reformation must have been continued a long time before it could answer the purpose of recovering the good opinion of the public.

Perceiving, therefore, that all intimacy with him was rather avoided, he gave over every attempt of cultivating new acquaintance; and, as it frequently happens to those who have deservedly forfeited the public esteem, he endeavoured to indemnify himself for the loss of character and the want of respectable society, by an unbounded indulgence in sensual pleasure, and the company of a few dependants; to which he added, the contemplation of accumulating wealth, which indeed was the only *mental* enjoyment he had, as well as the only cause of his remaining out of Europe; for, according to the custom of money-makers, he had set his heart on a particular sum, and was resolved not to quit the superintendence of his own affairs till he had acquired it; after which he proposed to pass the rest of his life in uninterrupted enjoyment.

In this manner, therefore, Zeluco spent a few more miserable years in the West Indies; miserable surely they must have been, for what bodily gratifications, what accumulation of riches, could prevent that man from being wretched, whom no one approached that could avoid it, whom no one served but through fear, and who was conscious of being the object of the hatred and execration of all who knew him?

Fatigued and jaded by a life of comfortless voluptuousness, and finding a favourable opportunity of disposing of an estate he had purchased to great advantage in the island of Hispaniola, as well as a considerable part of his estate in Cuba, he granted a lease of the remainder, settled his affairs, remitted his money to Europe, and prepared to return to his native country, in expectation that his wealth would procure him there that happiness which

he found it unable to produce in the West Indies. E before he finally left this part of the world, he resolved settle an account, which, in his own vengeful heart, thought he justly owed to his neighbour, the Portugu merchant.

CHAPTER XIX.

Perfidy and Revenge.

In giving an account of Zeluco's adventure with the P tuguse merchant, it was remarked, that he slipped ou his own house, and returned, unobserved by his wife, any other person. With like caution, he ever after stained from mentioning what had happened.

When it became publicly known that Zeluco had b stabbed, the Portuguese expressed equal surprise, and ther more concern than other people, and was exceedin attentive in sending messages of inquiry about his hea

One of Zeluco's slaves having run away the same ev ing on which his master was stabbed, it was generally lieved that this slave had done the deed; Zeluco him encouraged that report, and for obvious reasons dis raged all pursuit or search for the fugitive. He had doubt, however, that the real perpetrator of the fact the Portuguese; and strongly suspected that the wife an accomplice. On his recovery, however, he than his Portuguese neighbour with the most satisfied air i ginable, for his obliging inquiries, and descanted every appearance of conviction on the treachery and gratitude of the fugitive slave who had so basely atte ed to murder him.

No man was ever more ready to forget a good c done to him than Zeluco, and none ever more tenacic remembered an injury: these opposite turns of dispos generally go together.

While Zeluco carefully concealed his suspicions w his own breast, he determined to act as if these suspi

amounted to certainty, and to be fully revenged of both the husband and wife. He saw, however, that it behoved him to act with great circumspection, and it was not easy to form what he considered as a suitable plan of revenge; for whatever concern the Portuguese had seemed to take in the health of Zeluco, he did not carry his dissimulation the length of renewing their intimacy; his wife likewise observed the utmost reserve towards Zeluco, giving him no opportunity of demanding an explanation of what was past, or of renewing the intrigue.

She had not proved with child during the first two years of her marriage, but in the course of that in which her adventure with Zeluco took place she bore a son. As the husband had been uncommonly anxious to have children, his impatience on that head had made him almost despair of ever having any. His joy on the happy event was equal to his former uneasiness, and his fondness for his wife was redoubled by his satisfaction in being a father; while the augmented attention which he paid her, joined to the natural affection she felt for her child, operated a favourable alteration in her character, and confirmed her virtuous resolutions.

Zeluco understood, with redoubled wrath and malignity, that two people he mortally hated lived with mutual confidence and in the happiest union; sometimes he had the mortification of hearing them quoted as a striking example of parental affection and conjugal felicity. He at length founded his scheme of revenge on a knowledge of these circumstances, and resolved to attack their happiness in its source.

By a few presents, and the intervention of his valet, he gained the maid of the Portuguese, and without exactly explaining what his views were, he prevailed on her to be subservient to them.

He was informed by the girl, that the nurse sometimes carried the child to a shady seat, at a small distance from her master's house; Zeluco passed that way one day, when he knew of the Portuguese and his lady being else-

where; he expressed the greatest joy at the sight of the child, took it in his arms, and fondled it with every appearance of the tenderest affection; he earnestly and repeatedly begged of the nurse to be exceedingly careful of the sweet infant, presented her with a purse of gold as a reward for her past care, and promised her another in due time, provided she persevered in her tenderness; he earnestly entreated the woman not to mention what had passed to her master; and taking his leave with seeming reluctance, entreated her to return to the same place with the child, as often as she should know that her master was absent, or engaged with company. He had several interviews of the same kind, in the same place, within the space of a month.

Whatever reflections occurred to the nurse on these secret visits, and his extraordinary affection for the child, she kept a prudent silence, and hoarded them carefully up within her breast, as a precious fund to be expended among her particular friends and gossips on future occasions.

Zeluco at length arranged matters so that the lady and her maid approached the place while he was caressing the child; and as soon as he was satisfied that they observed him, he delivered the infant with precipitation into the nurse's arms and retired.

The lady, greatly surprised at what she had seen, questioned the nurse, who, with some hesitation, (as the maid was present), told her all that passed, without suppressing a circumstance, except that of her having received the purse.

The lady was more and more at a loss what construction to put on so strange and unlooked-for an incident.—She asked the nurse, 'Whether she had ever mentioned this matter to her master?'

'No, never; I do assure your ladyship I never did,' replied the nurse with earnestness.

'I do not know why you should not,' said the mistress, with affected unconcern; 'as there seems something a

little extraordinary in this man's taking so much notice of the child, I think it would be proper that my husband should be informed of it.'

'Lord, madam,' said the maid, who was instructed to prevent this, 'if the nurse were to inform my master of all those who caress and seem fond of the child, she could do nothing else;—every mortal is struck with his beauty, and Signor Zeluco, in admiring and caressing him, does no more than others. To mention him in particular to my master would seem exceedingly odd.' The mistress seeming still to balance whether it would not be her safest course to acquaint her husband;—the maid continued, 'I will refer it to the nurse, if any body could ever look on the child without admiration.'—The nurse declared, that nobody ever could.—'Only look at him yourself, madam,' continued the maid; 'observe how like an angel he smiles. Can you be uneasy, or think it extraordinary, that all the world should admire and wish to caress such a delightful creature.'

The mother, whose eyes were fixed on the child during this harangue, thought, as she gazed, that the incident which had given her uneasiness was less extraordinary than she had at first imagined, and at length allowed herself to believe, that it was very natural for Zeluco, or any other person, to behave as he had done.

Let those who are ready to accuse this poor woman of excessive weakness, remember that she was a mother, and that the infant, though far from being handsome, was her first born and only child.

Yet as she is represented as not deficient in quickness of thought and clearness of understanding, she may be thought to have acted inconsistently with this character, in attempting to conceal from her husband what he was so likely to come to the knowledge of, from the babbling propensity natural to nurses and maids. If I am not mistaken, however, the sex in general are apt to shrink from present inconveniences, even when sensible that by encountering them they would obviate the risk of future

misfortunes. The lady was certain that the knowledge of Zeluco's secret visits to the child would throw her husband into immediate ill-humour, and awake very disagreeable reflections in his mind. She flattered herself, that he might never hear a word of the matter, and she could not bear to disturb the present calm to secure herself from a future storm, which possibly might never occur. In behaving as she did in this particular, she will be kept in countenance by many who act on the same principles in matters of far greater importance; but she seems to have been entirely forsaken by her natural sagacity, when she anxiously enjoined the nurse and her own maid to conceal what had happened from her husband. For it required but a superficial glance of their dispositions to perceive, that this was giving them an additional incitement to reveal it.

She was probably tempted to this inconsiderate step, by the knowledge she had, that Zeluco was soon to return to Europe; and she lost no time in persuading her husband to remove with his family to his house in town, that Zeluco might not be tempted to seek another interview; and she resolved to keep herself and the child sequestered from any chance of meeting him before his departure from the island.

Zeluco being informed of these circumstances by the maid, who, on the pretence of some necessary arrangements, remained one day after the departure of her master and mistress; he, in prosecution of his base scheme, gave her a letter, which he desired her to place in such a situation as to be observed by the former, and seem to have dropped from the latter. When the maid joined the family in town, she executed these orders with but too much dexterity. While she stood behind her mistress, who was writing, the husband entered the room a little abruptly, and told his wife that somebody wished to speak to her in the parlour. She immediately locked up her papers into a small writing desk, and withdrew.—As she rose, the maid took that opportunity of dropping

the letter she had received from Zeluco, beneath the seat her mistress was quitting, and immediately followed her out of the room. The husband picked up the letter, which was unsealed, rumpled, addressed to his wife, and conceived in the following terms.—

'It is impossible for me, my dearest soul, to express the happiness I have enjoyed in seeing and caressing the sweet pledge of our mutual love; I shall never forget your kind attention in directing the nurse to the spot where I had that delicious enjoyment. I must, however, acquiesce in the prudence of your determination, to persuade your tyrant to move for some time to his house in town, where an interview may be arranged with less danger, and I shall wait with as much patience as I am able for that happy moment.

'*P. S.* I continue to disguise my writing, and earnestly recommend to you the same precaution.'

The astonshment and rage of the Portuguese on reading this may be easier imagined than described; seizing his wife's writing-desk, which stood upon a table, he carried it into his own apartment, and there read over and over the fatal scroll which filled his heart with anguish. Notwithstanding the disguise of the writing he easily distinguished it to be that of Zeluco,—which left him no doubt of his wife's infidelity. The first violence of his wrath and indignation might have proved fatal to her, had it not been damped and counteracted, in some measure, by the grief and dejection he felt, that the child he so dearly loved, and had been so proud of, might not be his own, but the offspring of his detested enemy.

The impression of sorrow, from whatever cause it is derived, mollifies the violence of rage, and the conflict of those opposite sentiments in the present instance, repressed a little the madness of the husband's fury. However convinced he was of his wife's guilt, he could not be certian that the child was *not* his own; and all his rage against the mother could not unloose the bonds of affec-

tion which nature and the child's infantine endearments had twined around his heart.

Hearing the voice of the nurse and the maid in the passage, he called them into his apartment, and shutting he door, he, with as much serenity as he could assume, questioned the nurse, whether any man was in the use of accosting her at a particular place which he named, and of caressing the child.

The woman denied that any such thing had ever happened.

'Be sure, woman, that you speak truth,' said the Portuguese.

'I would not depart from the truth,' said the nurse, 'for all the gold in Mexico.'

The Portuguese repeated the question, and the nurse gave the same answer.

'Thou abominable wretch,' cried he, 'I have certain information of the contrary; and nothing but an avowal of the truth shall save thee from punishment here, and a long expiation in purgatory hereafter!'

'I have told the truth,' said the woman, hesitating with conscious falsehood.

The Portuguese, with augmented rage and repeated threats, continued to question her.

She at length acknowledged, that Signor Zeluco had several times met her at the place he mentioned, and had shewed great fondness for the child.

'Wretch!' cried the enraged Portuguese; 'Why did you deny this?'

The nurse was silent.

'What harm did you imagine there was in that man's seeing and caressing the child?'

'No harm in the wide world,' said the nurse; 'for if there had been any harm I should never have permitted it.'

'Wherefore then did you conceal it from me? and wherefore did you so solemnly deny it just now?'

The confounded woman finding herself so hard beset,

and quite unable to extricate herself by prevarication, acknowledged, that she had concealed it from him at the request of her mistress.

'I suspected as much,' cried the husband.

'But my mistress,' interrupted the maid, 'desired her to conceal it for no other reason but merely that your honour might be saved the uneasiness of hearing that another man was in the practice of caressing, and shewing such paternal affection to your child.'

The wrath of the Portuguese, which had been for some time glowing, was so instantaneously kindled by this suggestion, that he struck the maid an unmanly blow on the face, so that the blood gushed from her nose and mouth, in which condition she ran to her mistress, who was just returned to her own apartment.

The poor woman was exceedingly terrified at her husband's violence, and her fear was not diminished when she understood the cause of it. She was now sensible of her imprudence, in concealing from her husband, Zeluco's treacherous visits to her child, and in depending on the discretion or fidelity of servants. She knew nothing, however, of the letter, and imagined that her husband's ill-humour proceeded solely from his hearing of Zeluco's behaviour. She thought her best course was to explain the whole to him without farther delay.

She flew into his apartment, assured him that the information which displeased *him* had given still more vexation to *her*, and that when the nurse acquainted her with it, her own first impulse had been to mention it directly to him; that she sincerely repented her not having done so, for she was now convinced that a virtuous woman should have no secrets concealed from her husband.

The Portuguese, who had listened hitherto with a stern countenance, burst into a laugh, which forcing its way through features distorted with anger, and the thoughts of vengeance, chilled his wife with horror. She proceeded in a confused manner to assure him, that however improper it was not to acquaint him with what the nurse told

him, she had refrained for no other reason than to save him uneasiness.

'Your faithful confident and you adhere I find to the same story, and are both equally tender of giving me uneasiness,' said the Portuguese, renewing his frightful laugh; 'but be assured, faithless woman, that you shall not deceive me twice, and that your punishment, if possible, shall equal your guilt.'

'What guilt? alas! I know no guilt,' cried the trembling woman; 'I am innocent as the babe newly born.'

'Before you have the effrontery to speak of innocence, you should learn to be more careful of your letters—look at this,' cried he, holding the letter open before her eyes.

'Holy virgin!' cried the astonished woman, as she perused the letter; 'I never saw this paper before,—it is a forgery of the villain's to deceive you, and ruin me.'

'How came this forgery of the villain's to drop out of your pocket?' said the husband.

'It assuredly dropped not out of my pocket,' replied she; 'for as I hope for mercy from heaven I never saw the paper before.'

'No, never; to be sure,' said the husband, with a ghastly sneer; 'You—you are innocent as the babe newly born.'

'I am indeed,' exclaimed the wife, 'and when you have patience and coolness to examine the whole matter you will find me so.'

'What examination is necessary?' cried he; 'what confirmation can be added to such a letter as this?—this infallible evidence of your shame!'

'That letter is an evidence of nothing, but of the mean revenge of a disappointed villain. I beseech you therefore,' added she, laying hold of his arm; 'I earnestly beseech you, for the sake of your child, for your——' 'Think not,' interrupted he, shaking off her hand, 'to deceive me again;—be gone to your chamber, and repent, for be assured that I will have ample revenge.' So saying, he thrust her rudely out of the room, and shut

the door with violence. She was put to bed, and passed the rest of the day and the whole night in anxiety and terror.

CHAPTER XX.

Unjust accusations seldom affect us much, but from some *justice in them.*

As soon as he was alone, the husband broke open her writing-desk; but after a very strict scrutiny he found nothing to justify the insinuations of the letter, or in the smallest degree to confirm his suspicions:—'But what confirmation is needed,' said he, 'of her criminal connection with this man?—why should he wish to see the child in a clandestine manner?—why did she order the nurse to conceal this from me?—And above all, this letter, on which he has in vain attempted to disguise his handwriting, *must* have fallen from her pocket!—O! her guilt is manifest!'

In reflections of this nature, and in forming plans of vengeance, the Portuguese passed as sleepless a night as his lady.

The following day she was so ill that she kept her bed; the husband went not once to inquire for her, nor did he send any message: he also kept his apartment, and was heard walking backwards and forwards with a hurried pace the whole of that day. The next forenoon the physician who had formerly attended Zeluco called accidentally, and was taken immediately to see the lady, one of the servants having informed him she was indisposed.

As she had the greatest confidence in the doctor's good sense and prudence, and knew also that her husband had a very high opinion of him, she informed him of the true cause of her illness; Zeluco's visits to the child; her own imprudence in ordering the nurse to conceal them; of his hearing of them, his jealousy thereupon, and of the horrid anonymous letter.

The first thing that struck the physician in her narrative was, that no motive was assigned for the base scheme the lady imputed to Zeluco: he hinted this to her.

She said, it must have proceeded from the natural malice of the man's wicked heart; she knew of no other motive.

The physician observed, that it was hardly credible that any man would form such a shocking scheme without some more particular cause.

The lady perceiving the force of this remark, thought herself obliged to mention her first connection with Zeluco; although that was a subject on which she never thought without pain. She could not help however giving as favourable a gloss to her story as possible, by declaring, that Zeluco had formerly had the insolence to make love to her; that no woman was safe from an insult of this nature; yet, as it is generally imagined that men seldom make such declarations but where they have reason to hope they will be well received, she had naturally wished to conceal this incident, though she had heard his wicked proposal with equal surprise and horror: and had, in consequence of his persevering, been obliged to acquaint her husband; and, finally, she now suspected that the pride of the man, hurt by her resistance, so different from what he was accustomed to, had prompted him to this diabolical scheme on purpose to ruin her.

It is evident that in this narrative the lady did not adhere exactly to the truth, but thought proper to sink the circumstance of her having at first agreed to meet Zeluco. If all those forgive her for this part of her conduct, who, in relating facts in which themselves are concerned, are apt to leave out what makes against them, and put in the most conspicuous point of view whatever is in their favour, it is to be presumed, that the Portuguese lady will not be censured by a vast number of our readers.

The physician, it is probable, made allowance for a bias so very general among men, and from which the fair sex themselves are not entirely free.

After inquiring very minutely into every circumstance, his suspicion fixed strongly on the maid as an agent of Zeluco's. On his hinting this to the lady, she declared, that of all her family this girl was the last she could suspect; because she had always displayed the most unbounded attachment to herself, and often expressed, particularly of late, an aversion to Zeluco.

This did not weaken the physician's suspicions. 'Poor girl,' continued the mistress, 'she is of a delicate constitution, and subject to hysterical fits; she was much terrified by my husband's treatment of herself, but still more on seeing me so ill. I happened to say, that I feared it would kill me; on which she was seized with a violent trembling, and has kept her bed ever since.

The physician asked, whether the lady had ever intrusted this maid, who seemed to be a great favourite, with any secret which it would give her uneasiness to have revealed.

The lady answered, with some warmth, that she had no such secret; that she cared not if all the actions of her life were made public; that she defied the power of malice;—and thus she ran on with a zeal and fluency natural to people who are endeavouring to justify themselves, and are conscious of not being entirely innocent; she concluded by asserting, that there was no part of her conduct she wished hid from the world.

The physician having waited till, being out of breath, she stopt, he then calmly observed, that his question was not of so extensive a nature as she seemed to imagine; that he was not so impertinent as to inquire whether she had ever done what she wished to conceal from the world, but only whether *her maid was acquainted* with any thing of that nature.

'Certainly not,' said the lady; 'since I am not myself conscious of any such secret, how is it possible that my maid could be acquainted with it?'—'I admire the acuteness and logical precision with which you reason, madam,' said the doctor; 'but I should be glad to know,

whether this maid was in your service at the time you mention when Signor Zeluco paid his addresses to you?'

'If she had, she could have known nothing of that nature,' said she. 'Certainly not,' said the doctor; 'but I wish to know the fact, Was she or was she not?' 'She was not,' answered the lady. 'So much the better,' resumed the doctor. 'I ask pardon, madam, for being so inquisitive; but I thought it of importance to have this point cleared up before I visit the maid, which I now mean to do with a view to discover, if possible, by whose means the letter was thrown in your husband's way; if that can be traced to the person you suspect, your justification follows of course.'

So saying he left the lady, and was conducted into the maid's chamber, and left with her alone. The maid immediately inquired how her mistress was?

'Your mistress is very ill indeed,' replied the physician, looking at her with a penetrating eye; 'some monster of wickedness has been bribed to ruin that worthy woman: you know of the forged letter which was thrown in your master's way—do you not?'

'I have heard of such a thing,' said the maid, changing colour.

'Have you any notion who has been guilty of such a perfidious action?' said the physician, still fixing her.

'Lord, sir!' how can I have any notion?' replied the maid.

'Could you have believed,' resumed the doctor, 'that such a viper crawled upon the earth?'

'I could hardly have thought it,' replied the maid, with a languid voice.

'Do you not think that the vengeance of heaven will pursue the vile wretch?' said the physician.

'Perhaps *she* will repent before she dies,' said the maid, trembling.

'*She!*' repeated the physician—'how do you know she is a woman?'

'Me!—I,—I know nothing;—no, nothing in the

least,' said the maid, in confusion; 'only if she *is* a woman, I hope she will repent before she dies.'

'If she is a woman,' cried the physician, 'she is a disgrace to her sex, and the vengeance of heaven will overtake her in this life, and hell awaits her in the next, unless she confesses her crime, and prevents the ruin of an innocent lady:—But how are you yourself? you seem very ill.'

'I am indeed not well,' replied the maid. The physician, feeling her pulse, cried with a voice of surprise, 'Good God, you are very ill indeed;—let me see your tongue.—Gracious heaven! what is this!—why, I had no idea of your being in this way.'

'O, dear doctor,' cried the maid, 'do not frighten me; you do not imagine I am in danger of dying.'

'Danger!' said the doctor; 'yes, assuredly: yet, perhaps,—at least, I hope you still may recover;—that is, provided you—in short I will do all I can for you;—but if you have any spiritual or worldly affairs to settle, you had best set about it directly.'

The doctor having ordered her some medicines, went into the apartment of the Portuguese, whom he found alone and in a very gloomy mood. He expressed satisfaction, however, at seeing the physician, who immediately told him that his lady had informed him of what had happened. 'Her assurance must equal her guilt,' cried the Portuguese, 'to enable her to mention it.' He then poured out a torrent of abuse against his wife. The physician did not think proper to interrupt him; but when he had done, he coolly asked what proofs he had of her guilt?

The Portuguese enumerated the circumstances of Zeluco's behaviour towards the child, his wife's having instructed the nurse and maid to conceal it, and then shewed him the letter.

The physician having heard him patiently, endeavoured to make him sensible that all these circumstances were not sufficient to justify the inferences which he drew

against a lady who had always behaved with affection to him, and the greatest tenderness to his child. 'Besides,' added he, 'these circumstances, inconclusive as they are, lose much of their weight, if they can all be accounted for on the very probable supposition of their being contrived by an enemy.'

'The letter!—the letter!' cried the Portuguese.—'Well,' said the doctor, 'the letter is of a piece with the clandestine visits; it was no difficult matter to bribe some person to throw a letter in your way in such a manner as that it would appear to have dropt from your lady. Recollect if there was any person in the room with her immediately before you observed the letter.'

'Nobody but her own confidential maid,' said the husband.

'And if an enemy had formed the scheme of ruining you both in this manner, who would he think of seducing as an assistant so likely as the domestic who attended her person? Consider also,' continued the doctor, 'how very improbable it is, that she would keep such a letter in her pocket.'

'If guilty people were always cautious, they would not be so often detected as they are,' said the Portuguese.

'But it is not natural to think,' rejoined the doctor, 'that the same want of caution which made her wear a letter of this importance carelessly in her pocket, would have appeared when you examined her papers? Did you find among them any other letters to the same purpose with this?'

He answered, that he had not.

'This, therefore, is a fair presumption,' said the doctor, 'that there never was any; that the letter you found was purposely thrown in your way by the direction of some person equally the enemy of you and your lady.'

CHAPTER XXI.

Comfortable Hints to Married Men.

WHILE they were conversing, the capuchin, who had attended Hanno in his dying moments, was introduced. This venerable person was spiritual director to all the Christians, white and black, in the family. The Portuguese immediately ordered, as was his custom, some cold victuals and a large flask of wine to be set before the father, who had only time to drink a few glasses when a message came from the sick maid, who earnestly wished to see him. He was rising with reluctance from his repast, when the physician begged his delay for a moment; and taking the Portuguese to a corner of the room, he, in a few words, explained his intention, which the other, on whom the doctor's arguments had already made some impression, having approved, they turned to the father, who in this interval had finished his flask of wine. The doctor then informed him, that a very unfortunate affair had happened in which he might be of service; that in short a discovery had been made, that the lady of the house had been unfaithful to her husband, as was proved by a letter from her lover, which she had dropt; that a plan was already formed for punishing her in an exemplary manner; that in the meantime she was kept in confinement till endeavours were made to discover those who had assisted in carrying on the correspondence with her lover, as there was reason to think she had been assisted by some person in the family.

The capuchin, who was a little warmed with wine, and who valued himself greatly on his eloquence, and on the happy talent he thought he possessed of consoling the afflicted, could not allow so fair an occasion of displaying it to slip unimproved; addressing himself, therefore, to the Portuguese, he expressed his concern for the misfortune which had happened to him, observing at the same time, that however painful it might be, his case was by

no means uncommon; for that a large proportion of husbands laboured under the same calamity. 'Not,' continued he, 'that I mean to insinuate that any number being in the same predicament renders you, my worthy friend, less a cuckold than if you were the only one upon earth. I only mention this circumstance, because, although not much to the honour of human nature, yet there is reason to think that mankind in general derive consolation from the thoughts of others being in the same disagreeable situation with themselves. I therefore assure you, that even among my acquaintance there are many, some of them very respectable gentlemen, to whom the same accident has happened that there is so much reason to think has befallen you, notwithstanding which they live as easy and comfortably as they did before; this depends entirely on people's way of thinking. Things of this kind are undoubtedly rather unpleasant at first; but when we are a little accustomed to them, they give little or no uneasiness; for habit reconciles us to any thing.'

The capuchin was a man of influence in the island; and the Portuguese, who had been, although unjustly, accused of Judaism, had more reasons than one for wishing to keep on good terms with him; yet he could not help betraying his impatience at the reverend father's manner of comforting him, by a most agonizing contortion of countenance at the last observation, which the other observing, he added, 'I perceive, sir, that you do not bear this dispensation with the resignation you ought; I must therefore desire that you will keep in your remembrance, that it has been undoubtedly permitted for some wise purpose; it will therefore be as impious as unavailing for you to murmur, for what has happened admits of no remedy. Now that the thing is done, it cannot be undone, at least I never yet heard of any method by which a man can be uncuckolded; this, my valuable friend, is the peculiar cruelty of your case; another person commits the crime, and you who are innocent suffer the shame. And what is still more vexatious, although

one wicked woman can place her husband in this opprobrious state, all the virtuous women on earth cannot take him out of it. I beg you will farther observe——' Here the eloquent father was interrupted in the middle of his harangue by another message from the maid; and was with some difficulty prevailed on by the physician to go directly, without waiting to finish his discourse.

When he was gone, the physician remarked to the Portuguese, that in the present state of the maid's mind she would probably confess every thing she knew to the father, and was impatient to see him for that very purpose; that although the capuchin was bound not to mention what was revealed to him in confession, yet there would be no great difficulty in gathering from him, particularly in his present trim, the import of all the maid should say, without his intending to inform them of a tittle.

The physician was right in his conjecture. The maid, terrified with the idea of immediate death, made a confession of her sins to the priest, and particularly acknowledged that she had been prevailed on by Zeluco's valet, to throw under the chair of her mistress a paper which he gave her, and which she now, to her great affliction, understood had produced the most mischievous consequences to her mistress; but the import of which she did not fully understand at the time; otherwise, she added, in alleviation of her conduct, she would not have been accessary to so great a crime.

The priest, although not the clearest-headed of his profession, had understanding enough to tell her, that the best reparation she could make was by a full avowal of this to her master, and he refused to give her absolution on any other conditions. On the maid's consenting to this, the father returned to the Portuguese, whom he found in his apartment with the doctor; and addressing himself to the former, he begged that he would attend him to the maid, who had something of the last importance to communicate.

They went accordingly, accompanied by the physician.

The maid, with a flood of tears, and the most earnest supplications to her master for his forgiveness, made an avowal of what she had told the priest; confessing at the same time, that she had prevented her mistress from informing him of Zeluco's interviews with the child, which was her intention the moment she was informed of them; and this the maid owned she had done at the desire of the same valet who had given her the paper.

The Portuguese with difficulty restrained his indignation against the woman; at length, however, he was prevailed on to say, he forgave her, and immediately desired to see the nurse. When she appeared, he asked in what manner his wife had expressed herself when first she was informed of Zeluco's behaviour to the child. The nurse naturally, and without hesitation, declared, that her mistress had insisted on her husband's being informed directly, but was persuaded from that measure by the maid.

After a few more questions, being fully convinced of his wife's innocence, he repaired along with the priest and the physician to the apartment in which she was confined; —apologized in the most earnest manner for the ill-treatment she had received; begged her forgiveness for the suspicions he had harboured; declared his perfect confidence in her virtue, which, he added, it should never again be in the power of villany or malice to shake.

CHAPTER XXII.

——He
Compounds for sins he was inclin'd to,
By damning those he has no mind to.

BUTLER.

THE lady behaved with the utmost propriety on the occasion; throwing the whole blame on the villain who had wove such an artful net of circumstances as might have caught the belief of the least suspicious of husbands.

'Dearly shall he pay for his villany,' said the Portuguese.

'Leave him to the torments of his own conscience,' rejoined his wife.

'In case his conscience should not torment him sufficiently,' said the father, 'the deficiency will be amply made up to him before he gets out of purgatory.'

The physician then drew the father out of the room, thinking the husband and wife would complete their reconciliation in the most satisfactory manner by themselves. He told them, however, as he retired, that he would have the pleasure of dining with them, and then walked with the priest into the garden, where he remained till dinner was announced.

His view in remaining was to endeavour to turn the Portuguese from thoughts of revenge, which he suspected to be brooding in his breast.

Being left alone with him after they had dined, he observed, that however strongly he was convinced of Zeluco's being the writer of the letter, yet, as he had had the precaution to disguise his handwriting, it would be fruitless to found any legal prosecution upon that circumstance.

'I despise all legal prosecution,' cried the Portuguese; 'but I will find means of doing myself justice without any such tedious and uncertain process.' The physician, apprehending that he meant to challenge him, represented that as a most absurd and uncertain method of repairing an injury: and the Portuguese, who had no such plan in his head, listened calmly to his arguments, and at length seemed to be convinced by their force, on purpose to deceive the physician, and prevent his suspecting the real design he had in view.

In a short time Zeluco was informed that the base train he had laid for the ruin of the Portuguese and his lady, with every circumstance of his perfidious conduct, was discovered by the husband; and although the particular cause of their misunderstanding was not publicly known; yet he was told that it had been whispered about, that he

was hurrying out of the island to avoid the resentment of the merchant.

This rumour determined him to postpone his voyage for some time, that he might give his enemy an opportunity of calling him to the field if he chose it; or in case he did not, that the world might be convinced that Zeluco himself was not afraid to give him that species of satisfaction.

It appears in the course of this narrative that Zeluco, however defective he was in other virtues, possessed a considerable share of constitutional intrepidity; in the early part of his life, from sheer vanity, he had oftener than once courted opportunities of distinguishing himself by a duel; and through the whole of his life he shewed, that whatever injustice or wickedness he was tempted to commit, he had also sufficient firmness to justify, if he thought that measure expedient; or to fight any person who accused him when he thought proper to deny it. Courage was indeed the sole virtue he had admired in others, and the only one he possessed himself. It has been often said, that cowards only are cruel; but although it is natural to think, and observation will justify the opinion, that they are more apt to be so than the intrepid: yet there are but too many proofs that one of the most respectable and brilliant qualities which can adorn the character of man, is sometimes united to the most odious that can disgrace humanity, and that courage is not incompatible with cruelty.

Of this Zeluco was a striking example; and the same person who with little regret had forfeited the good opinion of every virtuous mind, could not brook to have it thought that he feared the resentment of the man he was conscious of having injured, or that he would make any apology to him, rather than run the risk of injuring him in a more violent manner.

In the meantime the suspicions of the physician were not entirely removed by the dissimulation of the Portuguese. Notwithstanding the latter's declining to seek le-

gal or honourable redress from Zeluco, the doctor perceived something in his manner, which gave him the impression that the Portuguese meditated a less justifiable measure than either; his benevolence inclined him to prevent what his sagacity and knowledge of the man's character led him to suspect. His suspicion was confirmed a very short time after by the merchant's wife, who, under pretence of being indisposed, sent him a very urgent message to come and see her.—With perturbation of mind she told him, that she had reason to dread that her husband had formed a very criminal project of being revenged on Zeluco, and watched an opportunity of putting it in execution. She was prompted to this step by no regard for Zeluco, but from a horror at the intended deed, and from anxiety for her husband;—adding, that she was afraid of displaying much concern, partly because she did not wish that he should know of her being suspicious of what he intended, and partly that she might not awaken the jealous disposition of her husband;—with tears in her eyes, therefore, she entreated the doctor to exert all his influence to turn her husband from such an unjustifiable design; or if he failed, to use such means as his own prudence could suggest to render it ineffectual.

The good doctor applauded her conduct, and seized the earliest proper opportunity of renewing the subject, which he had once before touched on to the Portuguese; adding, that he feared he still harboured vindictive intentions against Zeluco; representing the danger of such a scheme: that however cautiously it might be executed, he would infallibly be considered as the perpetrator. 'I know no other reason which you can have for suspecting that I harbour such intentions,' said the Portuguese, 'but your thinking it impossible, after what you know of this man's behaviour, that it should be otherwise.'

'You are mistaken,' replied the physician; 'I think it *ought* to be otherwise; and this is not my reason for harbouring suspicions.'

'I do not tell you,' said the Portuguese, 'that your

suspicions are well or ill-founded; but could you be surprised if *it* were as you suspect?'

'Neither shall I be surprised,' rejoined the doctor, 'if you are convicted and executed, for gratifyng your revenge in such an unjustifiable manner. Come, come, sir,' added he, 'allow yourself to be guided by reason, and not impelled by passion in this matter: consider what a dreadful situation your wife and child will be in, should any misfortune befall you in consequences of such an attempt. The wisest plan you can follow, since this man is on the point of leaving the island, is to let him go in safety, and it is probable you will never see him more.'—Here the Portuguese shook his head.—'Then, sir,' resumed the doctor, 'your next best measure is to challenge him honourably.'—'What right has a man who has acted so perfidiously to expect that he is to be so dealt with?' said the Portuguese. 'None,' replied the doctor; 'but were I in your place, I should be more solicitous about what was reputable for myself, than about what my enemy had a right to expect. I only hinted this as being of two evils the least; and the best argument that can be made use of to one who despises the Christian religion.'

'I do not understand you! what do you mean?' said the Portuguese. 'Why, that you are in that predicament,' answered the physician.

'Who! I despise the Christian religion!' cried the Portuguese, in terror and amazement.

'You seem at least to despise one of its most important precepts,' said the physician; 'from which it may naturally be concluded, that you have no great respect for the rest.'

'I have not the smallest comprehension of what you mean,' rejoined the Portuguese.

'Yet I have expressed my meaning very plainly,' said the physician; 'I really do not think you can with propriety be called a Christian.'

'Jesus Maria!' exclaimed the Portuguese, 'you fill me with horror. Why, sir, I take the Holy Trinity, the

Blessed Virgin, with St. Joseph her husband, St. James, and all the host of heaven to witness, that I attend mass regularly, and have always from my infancy believed in every article of faith which our holy mother church requires; and I am ready to believe twice as much whenever she is pleased to exact it; if this is not being a Christian, I should be glad to know what is.'

'Nay, my good friend,' resumed the physician, 'it is a matter of indifference to me what you do or do not believe; I am not, I thank God, your or any man's father confessor; but if you understood the *spirit* of the Christian religion half as well as you believe what the church exacts, you would find that your attending mass, and all your faith into the bargain, will not make you a Christian, while you indulge such a violent spirit of revenge.'

'As for that,' replied the Portuguese, 'neither the church nor the Christian religion has any thing to do with it; that is my affair, and depends on my private feelings; and it is impossible for me ever to forgive a villain who attempted to injure me.'

'It is because he attempted to injure you, that it is in your power as a man, and your duty as a Christian, to forgive him. Had he never injured you, nor even attempted it,' continued the doctor, 'it would indeed be impossible for you to have the merit of forgiving him.'

It will naturally be imagined, from the vindictive character of this Portuguese, that he was a hypocrite, and pretended to more faith than he really had; but this was not the case. It never had occurred to his mind that there could be any doubt of the truth of those tenets in which his father and mother had instructed him, and which he heard venerable-looking men in sacred habits proclaim from all the pulpits of Lisbon. He was decidedly of opinion, that none but monsters of wickedness, who ought to be burnt in this world by way of preparing them for the next, could harbour any doubt on such important points; he had indeed occasionally heard it hinted, that some of those doctrines were incomprehensible, and others

contradictory; but this did not convey to his judgment any reason for doubting of their truth. He never omitted, therefore, any of the ceremonies prescribed by the church; he confessed his sins regularly, performed penance faithfully, would not eat a morsel of meat on a Friday on any consideration; and with the most punctual perseverance repeated daily his Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo, to the last bead of his rosary. A person who thought that the whole of Christianity consisted in these and other ceremonies, could not but be surprised and shocked to hear his claim to the name of a Christian disputed. As to that thirst for revenge on every real or imaginary injury, which he had indulged from his childhood, and some other culpable propensities to which he was addicted, he considered all of these as venial foibles, which were more than expiated by his obedience to mother church in more essential points; and when his indulging in those culpable practices to which he was by temper or constitution prone came in question, he shrugged his shoulders, and said, 'Well, I thank God, they are neither heresy nor schism.'

The physician, however, endeavoured to give him a different notion of these matters, founding most of his arguments on passages of a sermon to be found in the gospel of St. Matthew; for this happened to be a physician who sometimes read the bible; there are, it would appear, some of that kind in America. The Portuguese, at first, thought the passages in question of a very singular nature; and as they were plain and intelligible, and nothing mysterious in them, he could hardly believe that they were quite orthodox; besides, he was a good deal surprised that certain articles which he thought of great importance were not touched upon; yet on being informed who the person was who had preached this sermon, he could not deny that it had a fair chance of being sound Christianity. The physician having brought him so far, found little difficulty in persuading him that it was his duty as well as his interest to leave Zeluco to his own wicked

heart, which carried its punishment within itself; hinting also the probability of his falling sooner or later within the grasp of the laws of society, which his passions continually tempted him to violate.

It was probably owing to the remonstrances of this extraordinary physician that Zeluco left the island in safety; and the Portuguese merchant was indebted to him for being freed from the two most tormenting demons that can possess the human breast, jealousy and the spirit of revenge.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> To whom can riches give repute and trust,
> Content or pleasure, but the good and just?
> Judges and senates have been bought for gold;
> Esteem and love were never to be sold.
>
> POPE.

When it was evident that the Portuguese had no intention of calling Zeluco to account for his base behaviour, he publicly announced the time of his departure from the Havannah; and having freighted a vessel entirely for his own use, after a prosperous voyage he arrived at Cadiz, where he was detained for some time; but as soon as he had transacted his business he proceeded to Sicily.

Soon after his arrival at Palermo, Zeluco furnished a house expensively, and began to live in a most magnificent style; inviting every person of distinction to his table, and entertaining in the most sumptuous manner. This way of living, with the idea universally entertained of his great riches, soon acquired him a numerous acquaintance, and the warmest professions of attachment.

Zeluco, who had never known any motive of action but self-interest, was not deceived by such professions; but while he plumed himself on account of his superior penetration, he was the dupe of his own maxims, which

being drawn from the feelings of a corrupted heart, were often erroneous.

Insensible himself to the ardour of friendship, he thought there was no such sentiment, and most certainly never had a friend. What the world calls friendship, in his opinion, was merely a compact of conveniency or interest between a class of people, in which it was tacitly agreed, that when, by the loss of fortune, health, or otherwise, any individual of the association became useless to the rest, all farther connection with that person terminated of course.

Had Zeluco been satisfied with thinking this was *often* the case, he would have been in the right, but he was convinced it was *always* so, and there he was wrong; all declarations of attachment and friendship, therefore, he viewed as indirect attacks upon his purse; the punctual attention paid to his invitations, he *rightly* considered as nothing else than a proof of the excellency of his cook, and of the superior flavour of his wine.

The favourable notion which he entertained of the symmetry and beauty of his own person and face, inclined him however to believe, that the partiality which several of the ladies displayed towards him was void of hypocrisy, and proceeded from sincere personal attachment. For Zeluco had no sooner returned to Palermo than he became an object of great attention, and sometimes a subject of controversy among the ladies.

The elegant turn of his person and the graces of his countenance were universally admired, and even his character and disposition were favourably thought of, from that common trick of the fancy which gives the head and heart as much sense and virtue as the face has beauty. But he had not remained long at Palermo till his real character began to develope itself, and then the graces of his countenance were called in question, and his features were said to convey an idea of malevolence, or even atrocity:—this happened from another play of fancy which transfers the deformity of the mind into the face.

Pleased with the attention paid him by the men, and the favour of some of the women, he passed his time less disagreeably than he had done in the West Indies. But that degree of popularity which he had obtained at his arrival gradually diminished; his temper, naturally insolent and overbearing, detached the most respectable of the men from his society; and the intolerable caprice of his disposition, joined to a continual jealousy of temper, rendered him at last odious to the women. He, therefore, with great satisfaction, embraced a proposal made by a Sicilian nobleman, more distinguished by rank than character, of accompanying him to Naples.

In that gay city he immediately set up a still more splendid domestic establishment than he had at Palermo, and as he played deep, and with apparent inattention, he was considered as a valuable acquisition by some very fashionable societies.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend.
POPE.

SOON after his arrival, he was presented to Signora Sporza. This lady was the widow of a Neapolitan nobleman, one of the poorest of a class of men in which few are rich. He had lived for two years after his marriage in a degree of magnificence more suitable to his rank than fortune, and died very opportunely when he had nothing left to live upon.

As, contrary to the advice of her friends, she had relinquished great part of the funds appropriated for the security of her own jointure, to relieve her husband's difficulties, she had nothing to support her after his death, but the revenue arising from the small part which remained, and a very moderate pension granted to her by the court.

She lived, however, in a decent, not to say a genteel

style, which was the more surprising, because, although her husband had left no money to maintain her, yet he contrived to leave a child by another woman for her to maintain.

Signora Sporza was not acquainted with this circumstance till several months after her husband's death, when she was informed of it by the mother, who was then in a starving condition, and who, as the wretched woman herself expressed it, would not have applied to her for relief, had she not been driven by compassion for her infant more than for herself.

Those same relations who had advised Signora Sporza not to relinquish any part of what was secured by marriage articles to herself, for the sake of an extravagant husband, exclaimed against the indecency and folly of her supporting an adulterous bastard, and its wicked mother; they insisted upon it, that she, of all women, had the least call to take such a load upon her. All the answer which Signora Sporza made to these exclamations and arguments, was desiring them to find out some other woman, or man, if they pleased, who would maintain the unhappy woman and her child, in which event she was willing to yield up her claim. 'Till that is done,' added she, 'however indecent it may seem, I must be indulged in this folly.'

She accordingly took both the mother and child into her house, where, contrary to the prediction of her relations, that the two serpents she was taking into her bosom would certainly sting her, they greatly contributed to her happiness; for the wicked woman became a most grateful and serviceable domestic, and Signora Sporza grew as fond of the child, who was a very sprightly boy, as if he had been her own.

This lady was of a character which rendered her universally agreeable; she supported the inconveniencies of very narrow circumstances with so much gaiety and good humour, understood the art of arranging her parties so judiciously, and animated them with such pleasantry, that

her assemblies were thought the most agreeable, though the least splendid in Naples. As she was well received everywhere, and her house frequented by the most fashionable company, Zeluco thought it worth his while to cultivate her acquaintance, and he was for some time a pretty constant attendant at her assemblies. One circumstance, however, made him less so than otherwise he would have been; the play in general was not so deep as in many other assemblies, owing to Signora Sporza's discouraging it as much as she easily could. Independent of more permanent ill consequences, she declared an aversion to deep play on account of the immediate gloom with which it overspread every countenance engaged in it, to the entire destruction of all good-humour and pleasantry. But Zeluco had a greater relish for deep play than for either good-humour or pleasantry; and as he sometimes met at Signora Sporza's with people of the same turn of mind, they were apt to indulge their humour in spite of her remonstrances, which indeed, however seriously *meant*, were always jocularly made.

Among the British subjects at this time at Naples, there were two young Englishmen, Mr. N—— and Mr. Steel, who lodged in the same house, although of very different characters. The honourable Mr. N—— had already made the tour of Europe, and returned to his native country more free from narrow prejudices, less infected with foreign fopperies, and more improved both in knowledge and in manner, than the generality of his countrymen who have made the same tour. After remaining a few years at home, he was seized with a complaint in his breast threatening a consumption, for which he was advised to return to Italy, and resided for the most part at Naples, where he intended to remain a year longer, although at this time he seemed to have in a great measure regained his health.

Mr. N—— had been well acquainted with Signora Sporza, during his first residence at Naples, and was now

on the most friendly footing with that lady. Besides his companion Mr. Steel, he had introduced to her acquaintance another countryman of his own—Mr. Squander. This gentleman was distinguished by spending more money with less enjoyment than any English traveller in Italy; without any knowledge of horses, or any love for the animal, he kept a stable of English horses at Naples. His incitement to this was his having heard a certain peer who had a violent passion for the turf mentioned with admiration for having established a horse-race in the English style. Mr. Squander matched one of his horses with one of his lordship's, and had the renown of losing a greater sum than ever was lost at a horse-race at Naples; what rendered this the more memorable though the less surprising was, that he rode himself. He gave frequent entertainments, to which he invited his own countrymen only; they generally ended in drunkenness, noise, and riot. He bought pictures, statues, and seals, because they were highly praised by the venders; and afterwards gave them away in presents, because they were despised by the rest of the world. Without any inclination for gaming, this young man was ready on the slightest invitation to join any party at deep play, and had sometimes been drawn into that above mentioned at Signora Sporza's. As he was the only one of this party devoid of skill, and who played without attention, he generally lost the most, and sometimes was the only person who lost at all.

How Mr. Steel came to be connected with Mr. N—— will appear hereafter; but as he and Squander had been presented by him to Signora Sporza, she was particularly uneasy to see them throw away their money. She was uncommonly attentive to strangers, and rather partial to the English;—by her frank and engaging manners, she gradually overcame their natural reserve, and dissipated their timidity: and some of that nation who, from the time of their crossing the channel, had never dined but with a club of their own countrymen, and had never gone

twice to any other assembly at Naples, were insensibly prevailed upon to attend those of Signora Sporza, and at length they went with pleasure instead of reluctance.

At her assembly one evening, Signora Sporza perceived the same party forming with which Mr. Squander had lost so much money. 'Why do you not advise your countryman,' said she, in a whisper to Mr. N——, 'to avoid these people, they will pillage him of all his money.'

'Because,' replied Mr. N——, 'my countrymen hates advice more than he loves money.'

'You Englishmen,' resumed she, 'perhaps consider advice as an encroachment on that liberty you are so fond of.'

'Certainly,' said Mr. N——, smiling; 'the Cherokees, and other refined nations in America, think in the same manner.'

'Will you not try then to keep him out of those people's hands?' said she.

'I should try in vain,' said Mr. N——; 'but if you please to draw him off to a safer party, whatever he may wish, he is too awkward, and will be too much embarrassed, when a lady speaks to him, to be able to excuse himself.'

'Basta!' cried she, and immediately accosting Squander; 'we have need of you here signor,' said she; and so she engaged him for the evening with a party who played at a very small stake.

Signora Sporza thus using all her address to prevent deep play at her assemblies, and to save the unwary from being preyed upon, the gamesters gradually paid her less attention, and at last entirely forsook her house, for that of another lady with whom Signora Sporza was on ill terms, and who, out of mere spite, established an assembly at her own house on the evenings which Signora Sporza had fixed upon.

Zeluco, although he now possessed far more wealth than he could enjoy, required the agitation of gaming to ward off the intolerable languor which is apt to invade

unoccupied minds, and also to preclude reflection, or retrospect on past conduct, which in him was always attended with self-condemnation. He therefore became a constant attendant at the rival assembly, and a considerable time had passed since he had waited on Signora Sporza, when he observed her one evening at the opera, accompanied by two ladies, neither of whom he had ever before seen. The elder a genteel looking woman, between forty and fifty years of age;—the other about twenty: he gazed on the latter, and thought her by far the most beautiful woman he had ever beheld; the longer he looked he was the more confirmed in that opinion: he now regretted the coldness subsisting between him and Signora Sporza, and resolved to use all means for removing it, as the most easy way of being introduced to the lady whom he so much admired. Impatient as he was to address Signora Sporza, he hesitated about doing it that night, lest she should impute it to the real cause. A glance from the young lady brought him at once to decision; he could no longer command his impatience; but leaving Signora Sporza to put what construction she pleased on his behaviour, he suddenly darted from his own box, and entered that in which she and the two strangers were. With eagerness, and in the most obsequious language, he apologized to the former for not having paid his duty to her of late, imputed it to indispensable business, and begged to be permitted that honour the next morning, alleging he had something of importance to acquaint her with. Having finished his apology, he bowed very respectfully to the strangers, and then looked with significance at Signora Sporza, who heard him with the reserve of offended pride, taking no notice of his significant look, but after a grave bend of her head to him, resumed her conversation with the strangers as if no other person had been in the box. In spite of this very cool reception, Zeluco kept his place in the box, and his eyes almost constantly rivetted on the young lady, till the opera was finished, and then attended them to their carriage; after which he went home and ruminated all

the rest of the night on the charms of the fair stranger.

He waited next morning on Signora Sporza, who had not been an inattentive spectator of the impression which her young friend's beauty had made on Zeluco; she allowed him with the most cruel tranquillity to go through the ceremony of explaining his pretended affair of importance, without interrupting him, or assisting him in his way to the real business which she well knew was the object of his visit.

She heard him without seeming to take any interest in what he said;—the important affair did not draw from her a single observation; he was so much disconcerted by the coldness of her behaviour, that he was unable to introduce any discourse regarding the strangers. He wished to do this in an indirect manner, as a thing in which he took little concern, and waited for a favourable opportunity.

'Do you know,' said Signora Sporza, interrupting the silence, 'how many birds his majesty killed yesterday? I heard he went early a shooting.'

'*A-propos*,' replied Zeluco; 'Pray, signora, who is that lady I had the honour of seeing with you yesterday at the opera?'

'Very *à-propos* indeed,' said she; 'may I ask which lady you mean; there were two in the box with me last night.'

'Two!' cried Zeluco: 'O yes; I now recollect there were two;—but I mean—I mean the *elder*.'

'She is a very near relation of mine,' replied she, suppressing a smile; and then turned the conversation to a different subject, which, with the awkward manner in which he had introduced his favourite topic, increased his embarrassment. Yet before he took his leave, he recovered his presence of mind so far as to let a china snuff-box he had taken off the table, fall on the hearth, where it instantly shivered in pieces. After making becoming apologies, he took his leave, and the same day sent a

gold snuff-box, enriched with diamonds, with a letter to Signora Sporza, entreating her to accept of the one as an atonement for having destroyed the other.

CHAPTER XXV.

Digna minùs misero, non meliore viro.

OVID.

SOME few days after this, Zeluco again waited on Signora Sporza. She received him with more frankness than at his last visit; he imputed this to the benign influence of the snuff-box: as soon as he was seated she whispered her maid, who instantly withdrew.

They talked for a while on the common incidents of the place; of a new singer that was expected; of a violent explosion which had happened the preceding night from Mount Vesuvius; of the queen's having seemed out of humour at the last gala; of a man who had stabbed his rival in the street at mid-day, and then had taken refuge in a church; of a religious procession that was to take place next morning, and of a ball in the evening.

Zeluco endeavoured to turn the conversation from those topics, so as that it might seem to fall undesignedly on that which was the object of his visit. Signora Sporza observing this said, 'I will give you the history of the ladies by and by, signor; but I expect two people immediately, to whom you have rendered a most essential service; and you must permit them to thank you in the first place.'

He could not possibly comprehend her meaning: but soon after the maid introduced a very handsome young woman, plainly dressed, with a child in her arms, followed by a genteel-looking man, who seemed to be a tradesman, and a few years older than the woman.

Zeluco was greatly surprised at their appearance.

'This is your benefactor, Camillo,' said Signora Sporza, addressing herself to the man, 'the generous person who enabled me to free you from prison.'

'I am greatly indebted to you, signor,' said the man, in a most respectful yet manly manner; 'and although I do not absolutely despair of being one day enabled to repay what you have so humanely advanced to liberate me, yet I shall never be free from the strong sense of obligation I feel towards you.'

'Ah, signor!' cried the woman, unable to contain herself, 'you do not know what a worthy and noble-hearted man you have relieved; you do not know the extent of the blessed deed you have done; you have preserved my sweet infants from death; you have ransomed my beloved husband from prison, and you have saved my poor brain from madness. O, signor!' had you but seen——' Here the tears obscured her sight; the recollection of her husband's condition when in prison, with the keen sensations of gratitude, suppressed her voice;—she was ready to faint;—her husband snatched the child from her arms, and the poor woman sunk down on a chair, which Signora Sporza suddenly placed to receive her.

Camillo, with his child in one arm, supported his wife with the other; while Signora Sporza chafed her temples with aromatic spirits.—'Margherita will be well immediately, Camillo,' said Signora Sporza; 'see, she recovers already.'—'Thank heaven,' cried Camillo with fervour; then begged leave to conduct his wife home. Signora Sporza attended her with Camillo and the children into another room, ordered them some refreshment, and desired they might not leave the house till she came back.'

All this was as great a mystery to Zeluco as it is to the reader.—'If I had suspected,' said Signora Sporza to him, as she returned to the room in which he had remained, 'that this poor woman would have been so much affected, I should have spared you the scene, which I will now endeavour to explain.—I have known this young woman from her childhood; she was always the most cheerful sweet-tempered creature I ever knew. By my recommendation, on the death of her mother, she was taken into the service of the marchesa de B——; and in

a short time she became her favourite maid. The marchesa is liberal, and the girl was as happy as a maid could be whose mistress has the misfortune of being put out of humour every day as soon as she rises: the cause of her ill-humour was without remedy, and grew daily more inveterate; it proceeded from her observing more gray hairs on her head, and more wrinkles in her face every morning than she had seen the day before; but although her peevishness was *diurnal*, it did not last long at a time, for Margherita powdered her hair with wonderful expedition; and as soon as her face was varnished, and her toilet finished, she contemplated herself in the mirror with complacency, recovered her cheerfulness, and Margherita was happy for the rest of the day. Meanwhile, the man who has just left us fell in love with her, and she fell in love with him; and from that moment the girl's mind was more occupied with her lover than her mistress, whose head, after this incident, was neither so expeditiously nor so neatly dressed as formerly. When the marchesa found out the cause of this alteration, she was very much out of humour indeed, and told Margherita, that she must either give up all communication with the lover or with her;—'so you will consider the difference between me and him,' continued she, 'and then decide.' Margherita accordingly did consider the difference; and decided in favour of the man.—After leaving the marchesa, she passed more of her time than ever with her lover; and their mutual love increased to a very alarming height. Neither of them however ever thought of any other remedy than marriage; and notwithstanding the numbers who have found it a radical cure for love, to this couple it has hitherto proved ineffectual; in the opinion of the poor people themselves, the disease rather gains ground, although they have now been married two complete years, and have two children.

'The husband, who was at first employed in the coarse preparatory work for sculptors, has himself become a tolerable artist; he redoubled his industry as his family

increased, and saved a little money.—Margherita on her part cheered him under his labour, by the most active attention to family economy, by everlasting good-humour, and undiminished affection. The bloom and growing vigour of their children was a source of joyful foreboding to both.—It was delightful to contemplate the happiness of this little family. I often called on Margherita, purely to enjoy that happiness; health, content, and mutual love resided under their humble roof: obtaining with difficulty the superfluities, or even necessaries of life, they tasted pleasure with a relish unknown to those who have the overflowing cup of enjoyment constantly pressed to their lips. The gloom of their poverty was cheered by some of the brightest stars of pleasure, and by the hope of permanent sunshine. But all this fair and serene prospect was suddenly obscured by a terrible storm. The imprudent husband, impatient to become rapidly rich, was persuaded to raise all the little money which he had saved, to accept of a larger sum on credit, and to risk the whole in a commercial adventure:—the whole was lost;—and the obdurate creditor immediately seized on all the furniture and effects of this little family, and threw Camillo into jail.—Margherita, half distracted, came and told me her story. It happened by a superabundance of ill-luck that I was very low in cash myself, and had overdrawn my credit with my banker; I gave her what I had, but it was not sufficient to procure her husband's liberty, which happened to be what poor Margherita was most solicitous about. I begged of her to call on me the following morning, determining then to go in search of the necessary sum; but before I set out, the snuff-box, of which you desired my acceptance, arrived: instead of going to borrow money, signor, which, if you ever had the experience of it, you must know to be the most disagreeable thing on earth, I went and sold the snuff-box, and in my opinion to very great advantage; for the sum I received has not only freed the poor fellow from prison and redeemed his effects, but also makes him

a little richer than he was before his unfortunate attempt in commerce. I informed the joyful couple that I had received the money from you, which in effect I did; they know no more of the matter; and now that you have heard the whole, and have seen the family whom your bounty has saved, I am convinced you will approve of what has been done.'

Zeluco expressed great admiration of the benevolence of Signora Sporza, but insisted on redeeming the snuff-box, and restoring it to her. This she absolutely refused, saying, that the circumstances which she had related formed the only consideration which could have prevailed on her to accept of a present of that value; but she was willing to receive from him a snuff-box of the same kind with that he had so fortunately broken, which she would wear as a memorial of that happy event. Zeluco, finding her obstinate, was obliged to agree to this compromise of the matter.

But although Signora Sporza had informed him of all she knew, Zeluco himself knew certain particulars relative to this same affair, that he did not think proper to mention to Signora Sporzo; but which it is now necessary to impart to the reader.

It was already observed, that Zeluco was greatly surprised when Margherita was presented to him: he had, however, frequently seen her before; and this was one reason of his being a little confounded at her appearance at Signora Sporza's; but on recollecting, that although he knew her yet she did not know him, he re-assumed his composure.

In going to church, Margherita usually had passed the windows of Zeluco's apartment, and he had often remarked her as she went and returned to and from mass.

Being somewhat captivated by her face and person, he employed an agent to find out where she lived, and what she was; and afterwards commissioned the same person to engage her to meet a *very honourable gentleman*, who was greatly captivated with her beauty, at a house appropriated for a rendezvous of this nature. Margherita re-

jected the offers of the agent, baffled the arts employed to seduce her, and would have nothing to do with the very honourable gentleman.

This unexpected resistance increased Zeluco's ardour. His valet was acquainted with the man who had lent Camillo the money which the imprudent fellow had sunk in the ill-judged commercial adventure. This man, who thought his money in little or no danger when he first advanced it, was now exceedingly uneasy, and had already begun to press Camillo for payment. The valet acquainted Zeluco with those circumstances, who instructed the valet to convince the creditor, that it was vain for him to expect that ever Camillo could pay the money; and that as long as he was left at large, none of his friends would think of advancing it for him; but that if he were thrown into prison for the debt, some of his or his wife's friends would then certainly step forth for his relief. The man scrupled to use so violent an expedient; but having mentioned it to his wife, by whom Margherita was envied on account of her superior beauty, and hated on account of her unblemished character, she pressed her husband to adopt this harsh expedient, as the only means of recovering his money. The creditor, however, still hesitated, till the valet assured him, under the obligation of an oath of secrecy, that he knew a person who would advance a sum sufficient to pay all Camillo's debts, rather than allow him to remain long in prison: and he became bound himself to do this if Camillo was not released by the other within a month.

Zeluco, who took care not to appear in all this infamous transaction, imagined, that when Margherita was once separated from her husband, and humbled by distress, she would then listen to the secret proposals he intended to renew through his former agent.

The creditor having given orders to his attorney to proceed to extremities against Camillo, went himself to the country, that he might avoid a scene which his heart was not hard enough to support. But his orders were exe-

cuted very punctually on the very day in which Zeluco was so much struck with the beauty of the young lady at the opera. She had engrossed his mind so entirely, that from that moment he never once thought of Margherita, till he saw her introduced with her husband at Signora Sporza's, and found that the present he had sent to that lady with a very different view, had been the means of relieving a family brought to the brink of ruin by his insidious arts.

CHAPTER XXVI.

On aime à deviner les autres, mais on n'aime pas à être deviné.
ROCHEFOUCAULT.

WHATEVER shame or compunction Zeluco felt on receiving praises he so little deserved, for conferring benefits which he never intended, he certainly supported the character he had to act with great assurance.

After the compromise already mentioned, Signora Sporza gave him the following account of the ladies whose history he was so impatient to know. The elder, she said, was her cousin-german, and widow of Colonel Seidlitz, an officer lately deceased in the king of Prussia's service. She was a Neapolitan by birth, who finding it disagreeable after her husband's death to remain at Berlin, where she could not afford to live in the same style she had formerly done, had lately returned to her native country, with her daughter Laura: that she inherited from her father a small estate in the Campagna Felice; and her inclination for removing from Berlin to Naples had been strengthened by the hopes of making good a claim she had in right of an uncle, which, although of no great value in itself, was of great importance to her in her very circumscribed circumstances; and which, however just, did not the less depend on the favour of the minister.

Zeluco expressed much concern that two ladies of their merit should labour under difficulties, adding, that on ac-

count of their connection with her, he should think himself very happy in having it in his power to be of service to them.

Signora Sporza penetrated into the motive of Zeluco's proffered services; but she also knew that he was on an intimate footing with the minister, and might be of essential service to her cousin in the affair of her claim, the decision of which had been hitherto protracted on the most frivolous pretexts in the most litigious manner. It must be confessed, that, in the warmth of Signora Sporza's zeal to serve her friends, she was often regardless of the motive from which those who served them acted: could she have induced Zeluco to serve Madame de Seidlits from pure and honourable motives, no doubt she would have preferred it; but that not being in her power, she thought the next best was to secure the same effect whatever produced it. After thanking Zeluco, therefore, for his obliging offer, she added, that if he would do her the pleasure of calling in the evening, she would present him to her two relations; and that Madame de Seidlits would herself explain to him the grounds of her claim.

Being introduced accordingly to the two ladies as a friend of Signora Sporza, he became intoxicated with the elegant sweetness of Laura's manner, which he found equal to her beauty, and listened with much seeming attention and apparent solicitude to the history of her mother's suit, expressing great zeal to serve her on that or any other occasion.

The nobleman with whom Zeluco came to Naples had considerable influence with the minister: Zeluco himself had more; both were employed in giving him a favourable idea of Madame de Seidlits's case, or rather in inspiring him with a desire of promoting it, independent of the right on which it was founded. It is probable that Zeluco was thinking on something else during that part of Madame de Seidlits's narrative, for the foundation of her claim was what he was unable to explain, but it was also what the minister shewed no anxiety to understand.

Soon after, however, he publicly hinted, that having taken much pains to get a clear idea of Madame de Seidlits's claim, he was led to believe that the judges would decide in her favour. As the minister's prophecies of this kind were generally accomplished, Madame de Seidlits was congratulated on this happy omen, as if she had already gained her cause; and she imputed this fair prospect to the interposition of Zeluco.

From this time he had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with Laura, and he exhausted all his power of insinuation to ingratiate himself into her good opinion, but without success. This young lady had more penetration into character, and a far juster way of thinking than any of her sex with whom he had hitherto been acquainted; the same arts which had rendered him agreeable to many of them, had a contrary effect on her: she was not pleased when she observed, that, as often as he found her alone, his conversation was much interspersed with compliments on her beauty. She had been sufficiently accustomed to sweeteners of this kind, not to value them above their worth; and she had remarked, that they proceeded as often from a contempt of the understanding as from an admiration of the beauty of the person to whom they were addressed. But whatever doubts Laura might have of Zeluco's sincerity when he expressed a high opinion of *her* merit, there was something in his air and manner which convinced her he had a very high opinion of his own. In this, however, Laura was in some degree mistaken; for notwithstanding the loftiness of his manner, Zeluco's self-conceit was confined to his external figure, to his address, and his natural talents; he was conscious of having neglected the opportunities of improvement, and lamented the want of certain accomplishments which he with envy saw others possess; for with whatever plausible varnish he concealed his foibles or vices from the sight of others, he found it impossible to hide them from his own; so that when flattery poured the honey of adulation into his cup, the unconquerable power of conscience often turned it into gall, and rendered him un-

able to swallow the nauseous draught; yet by a singular effect of selfish caprice, though sensible of his own failings and vices, he detested all whom he suspected of having sufficient penetration to see into his real character, and of harbouring the same sentiments with himself. He could support the company of those only upon whose understandings he imagined he imposed, by giving them a much better idea of his character than it deserved. This accounts for his constant preference of ignorant society, and for the gloom and dissatisfaction which attended him as often as he was not engaged in such pursuits as bury thought and kill reflection. Yet this dissatisfied miserable man, on whose mind repentance and remorse were often obtruding themselves, was, on account of his wealth and the splendid style in which he lived, considered by many as remarkably fortunate and happy.

We are never more apt to be mistaken than in our estimate of the happines of grandeur. The grove overlooking the precipice has a fine effect at a distance; we admire the sublimity of its situation, and the brightness of its verdure, when gilded by the rays of the sun; we grudge no labour in scrambling up to this seat of pleasure, which, when attained, we often find cold and comfortless, overgrown with moss, pierced by the winds of every quarter, and far less genial than the sheltered bank from whence we set out. In like manner many men, who are viewed with admiration and envy at a distance, become the object of pity or contempt when nearly approached. Of this we may be most assured, that all the decorations of rank and the smiles of fortune cannot prevent the intrusions of remorse and self-condemnation upon a mind sensible of having abused talents, and neglected through life the opportunities of improvement; far less can they convey happiness, or even tranquillity, to one conscious of perfidy, cruelty, and ingratitude. But Laura did not at this time know that the peace of Zeluco's mind was disturbed by intruders of this nature; and the vain satisfaction which he frequently enjoyed from the contemplation of his face

and figure, she imagined extended to his whole character, and rendered him, in her opinion, by much too well satisfied with himself.

However profuse of panegyric Zeluco was, as often as he happened to find Laura by herself, yet he always stopt short, and abruptly changed the tenor of his discourse when her mother joined them.

This did not escape the observation of Laura; and one day on his making this sudden transition as Madame de Seidlits entered the room, Laura said to him gravely, 'There is no need, signor, for you to fly from the subject on which you have dwelt so long; I do assure you, the praises of my beauty are to the full as agreeable to my mother as they are to myself.'

At this unexpected remark, Zeluco's countenance suddenly displayed strong marks of displeasure, and even rage; but recollecting himself, he instantly smoothed it over with the smile of good-humour; and having bowed, and inquired after the health of Madame de Seidlits, he turned to Laura, saying, 'I fly not from the subject, madam; the praise of your good qualities is the most delightful of all subjects to me; but a sudden thought struck me immediately before your mother entered the room.'

'A sudden thought seemed to strike you also *after* she entered,' said Laura, 'if one may judge from the alterations in your countenance.'

'I know nothing of my countenance,' said Zeluco, with a careless air; 'but I have great satisfaction at my heart in informing you, madam,' continued he, and turning to Madame de Seidlits, 'that your claim is admitted to its fullest extent, of which you will have more formal notice this very day from the court.'

Madame de Seidlits expressed a strong sense of obligation to Zeluco, imputing her success to his influence and exertions; he on his part affected to place it wholly to the justice of her cause; expressing astonishment, however, at its having been delayed so very long, and with an os-

tentatious air of modesty disclaiming any kind of merit from *his poor feeble* efforts.

When Zeluco withdrew, Madame de Seidlits spoke of him with all the partiality of gratitude. Laura assented with coolness and moderation; she had observed something in his looks and conduct which displeased her, and conveyed some faint suspicion of his motives. Madame de Seidlits did not refine on looks or language; she founded her idea of Zeluco's general character on the personal obligation she lay under to him. On occasions of this nature the mother is generally more prone to be suspicious than the daughter; in this particular instance it was otherwise: Laura had as much sensibility to the sentiment of gratitude as her mother; but having doubts respecting Zeluco's disposition and motives, she would have been more pleased if the favour had come from another hand.

CHAPTER XXVII.

La physiognomie n'est pas une régle qui nous soit donnée pour juger des hommes; elle nous peut servir de conjecture.

La Bruyère.

Madame de Seidlits felt great satisfaction in the thoughts of her having at length obtained justice; and the good and friendly character of Zeluco was the frequent theme of her panegyric. When she was dwelling one day on this favourite topic,—'It is unfortunate,' said Laura, 'that the expression of his countenance corresponds so ill with the qualities of his heart.'

'I do not know what you mean, my dear,' said the mother; 'few men are so handsome as Signor Zeluco.'

'It is, I believe, generally thought so,' said Laura; 'but I confess I am not of the general opinion.'

'No! that a little surprises me.'

'When I speak of the expression of the countenance,' resumed Laura, 'I mean something different from beauty

or ugliness; there are many men whom I think plainer than Signor Zeluco, whose countenance has nothing of that expression, which I think rather disagreeable in his.'

'Am I to understand, child,' said Madame de Seidlits, smiling, 'that a man may be too handsome to be agreeable to you?'

'You would laugh at me if I said so,' replied Laura; 'yet if a man seems too sensible of his being handsome, you must admit that he is the less agreeable on that account.'

'When a man happens to be handsome,' replied Madame de Seidlits, 'people are apt to conclude, without any other reason, that he is vain of his looks.'

'I am not, however, so unjust,' said Laura; 'for example, I agree with the general opinion in thinking Mr. N———, the Englishman who is so often at our cousin's, very handsome; yet he is so free from airs, and all appearance of conceit, that it is impossible to think him vain. *His* features express goodness of heart; but I have seen features which, considered separately, seem as good, and yet the countenance on the whole to which they belong conveys the idea of the reverse.'

'I do not admit,' replied Madame de Seidlits, 'that this is the case with Signor Zeluco's.'

'Perhaps I am whimsical in this point,' said Laura; 'but I am convinced a man may be ill-looking, and yet give no idea of his being a bad man. And with respect to Signor Zeluco, I do think that those who do not know from experience that he is of a good character, might be apt to suspect him of a bad.'

'Nothing depends more on whim, or is more uncertain, than the pretended art of physiognomy,' said Madame de Seidlits.

'Yet it never fails to have some influence on our opinion,' replied Laura.

'It ought not,' replied Madame de Seidlits; 'it may mislead us greatly: Did you ever, for example, behold a

more lovely face than that of the wretched woman we saw the other night at the opera? yet her profligate life is well known. You may recollect also, how very harsh and unpleasant the countenance of your father's friend Colonel Sleiffen was; yet there never existed a worthier man. You ought, therefore, my dear Laura, to beware of imagining that vice is connected with deformity, or virtue with external beauty.'

'I beg pardon, my dear madam,' replied Laura, 'but I might use the two instances you have given in support of my argument; for the opera woman you mention, in spite of her beauty, I should never have thought a person of a virtuous disposition; and I always imagined I saw benevolence shining through the harsh features of Colonel Sleiffen.'

'I suspect,' replied Madame de Seidlits, 'that a previous knowledge of their character led your opinion in both cases; and I am sure that candour and charity ought to prevent our suspecting any person of being bad, till we have reason to believe so from their conduct.'

'I do assure you, my dear mother,' said Laura, 'that it always gives me pain to think ill of any body, and it affords me sincere pleasure to find them better than I expected.'

'Have you any reason to think ill of Signor Zeluco?' said Madame de Seidlits, with some emotion; 'I remember you said something that seemed unpleasant to him as I entered.'

'Why, no,—no,' replied Laura, with a little hesitation; 'he was paying me a few compliments, and stopped short as you entered. I only hinted to him that I liked no conversation when you were *not* present, that he judged improper when you were. But as to thinking ill of him,—I have—I have no reason;—we were talking of his looks.'

'*They* afford no reason indeed,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'I hope experience, my dear, will teach you to judge

of worth by some more certain criterion than the features of the face.'

'I hope it will, my dearest madam,' replied Laura, taking her mother's hand affectionately in both hers, 'and till then my opinions shall be directed by your judgment; of this you may rest assured, that nothing can ever influence me to think ill of those whom you *continue* to think well of.'

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Illa quidem primò nullos intelligit ignes.
Ovid Metamorph. Lib. 9.

Zeluco had been disconcerted, as has been mentioned, and was a little piqued at the manner in which Laura received the compliments that he paid her, and what she said in his hearing to her mother; but he was still more mortified to perceive the indifference which she displayed towards him on all occasions, notwithstanding his peculiar attention to her, and the pains he took to gain her regard. Had Laura been thoroughly acquainted with Zeluco's character, the distaste she had to him would not have been surprising; but she had not had sufficient opportunity of knowing him; she saw something in his manner indeed, and in the expression of his countenance, which she did not like, yet it might have been expected that the elegance of his person, and the splendour of his wealth, would have inclined her to get the better of this prejudice, as perhaps they would, had not her imagination been prepossessed in a manner which will appear singular.

Laura's father had a son by a former marriage, who was now a captain of dragoons in the Prussian service. This gentleman's most intimate friend was the Baron Carlostein, a man of family and very considerable fortune. They served together under the great Frederic, in the short war concerning the Bavarian succession.

After one unfortunate skirmish, a small detachment which Carlostein commanded, formed the rear of the retreating party, and defended a particular post with great obstinacy, that the main body might have time to make good their retreat; as he was falling back at last, his detachment was surrounded by a numerous party of Austrian hussars, and notwithstanding a very steady resistance, would have been cut to pieces, or made prisoners, had not Captain Seidlits, at the head of a few dragoons, made a desperate charge, by which the hussars were dispersed, and Carlostein, with the survivors of his detachment, brought off.

This was the commencement of a very intimate friendship between these two officers. At the termination of the war, Captain Seidlits prevailed on his friend to pass a few days at a little villa belonging to his father, in the neighbourhood of Berlin; Laura was then a child between ten and eleven years of age. She had often heard her father, and other officers, mention Carlostein as a young man of the greatest hopes; she had heard many ladies talk of him as remarkably genteel and amiable. Her brother had written in terms of high admiration of Carlostein's conduct in the action above mentioned, and she had heard his letters read to the company at her father's table. When Laura understood, therefore, that the person whom she had heard so much applauded was coming to her father's house, she expected to see a hero. The appearance and manners of Carlostein did not belie her expectation; during the short stay which he made at the villa, he was treated by Colonel Seidlits and his lady with that distinguished hospitality which it was natural they should pay to a man of his character and rank, the intimate friend of their son. What Laura had heard of this young officer, the respect paid him by her parents, the affectionate attachment of her brother, his own figure and elegant manners, tended to fire her fancy, and render him, in her mind, the first of human beings. He had received a wound with a sabre on one side of his brow,

which reached beneath his temple; the scar was covered with a slip of black plaster, appearing peculiarly graceful in the child's eyes, and a confirmation of the heroic character of Carlostein. Colonel Seidlits and his lady perceived Laura's admiration of their guest, and were amused with the earnest manner in which she sometimes looked at him, and the pleased attention with which she listened when he spoke.

The colonel one day observed her examining a print of Le Brun's picture of the family of Darius;—'What has caught your fancy here,' said he, coming behind and tapping her on the shoulder. The child imagined that she saw a likeness to Carlostein's in the countenance which Le Brun gives to Alexander.—'Do you not think,' replied she, 'that this face,' pointing to Hephæstion, 'has a resemblance of my brother.'

The colonel having looked attentively at the print, and observing the resemblance which *really* had attracted Laura's attention, fell a laughing, and replied, 'No, my dear, I cannot say I do,—but I own I am somewhat surprised that the resemblance between *this* face,' pointing to Alexander, 'and your friend Baron Carlostein, seems entirely to have escaped so accurate an observer as you are.'

The child seemed a little out of countenance, and when Colonel Seidlits recounted the circumstance to his lady, he added, 'I should be glad to know at what age a young lady begins to disguise her sentiments?'—'At the same age that young gentlemen begin to disguise theirs,' replied Madame de Seidlits, 'when they suspect, from the behaviour of those around, that there is something wrong or ridiculous in their sentiments. We first taught Laura,' continued she, 'to admire the baron, and afterwards by laughing at the child for the marks of admiration which she shews, we give her a notion that there is something ridiculous in it, of course she wishes to conceal what exposes her to raillery. A boy would have done the same.'

'I imagine not exactly in the same way,' replied the colonel.

Carlostein went soon after to his estate in a distant part of the Prussian dominions; he afterwards past some time in France; on his return to his own country, his duty as a soldier kept him with his regiment, and he had never after seen Laura, or thought of her more, than as an agreeable child, the sister of his friend.

The impression which he made on *her* imagination was certainly stronger, and more permanent; although her parents considered this partiality of Laura's to Carlostein as

> A violet in the youth of primy nature,
> Forward, not permanent; sweet, but not lasting,
> The perfume and suppliance of a minute.*

Laura herself endeavoured to conceal it to prevent the raillery to which it exposed her; yet it had some influence in making her reject the addresses of more than one lover before she left Germany; all of whom were thought advantageous matches, considering the smallness of her fortune. She found them to fall so far beneath the accomplished Carlostein, that she did not hesitate a moment. The same impression, though now considerably weakened by time, tended to make her view Zeluco with indifference, and often with dislike: so much did he fall below that model of which she still carried the traces in her memory. In this preference, Laura proved that her judgment was not directed by external appearance, for in the general opinion, Zeluco would have passed for a handsomer man than Carlostein.

* Shakespeare.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Non te Penelopen difficilem procis,
Tyrrhenus genuit parens.

HORAT.

HOWEVER much Zeluco was mortified and piqued at the indifference of Laura, his passion for her rather seemed to augment than to cool. As the house where he had the most convenient opportunities of meeting with her was that of Signora Sporza, he thought it indispensably necessary to keep that lady in constant good humour with him; with this view he cultivated her favour with the most respectful assiduity. He attempted in vain, however, to prevail on her to accept of any present of value: she always declined his offers with good-humour and gaiety, saying, nobody in whom she was particularly interested, was at that time in *prison for debt;* but when any such case occurred, she would apply to him for a ring or snuff-box proper for their relief. Zeluco considered all this as mere affectation and grimace, and was convinced that she would, in due time, unfold the particular mode in which she wished to be indemnified; for he took it for granted, that indemnified in one shape or other she intended to be, for whatever civility she shewed, or whatever trouble she took on his account. In the meantime, he plainly perceived that she would not stoop to be directly assisting to his views on Laura. He imagined she had come to a resolution to observe a neutrality, till such time, at least, as she could exact a very large subsidy for acting as an auxiliary.—But in these conjectures he had entirely mistaken the character of the lady.

Bred in a country where a very free system of gallantry prevails, Signora Sporza certainly did not view it in the light that a virtuous woman ought. In her youth, she had been a coquette, and she retained something of that appearance at an age when coquetry is less tolerable: which gave a handle to her enemies to insinuate that she

had carried matters beyond the point at which simple coquetry is supposed to stop; this, however, they were never able to ascertain;—and as those who were most industrious to spread the insinuation were, with better grounds, thought to be in that predicament themselves, their malice had the less effect. Her constant good-humour, humane disposition, and easy manners, rendered her highly agreeable to society in general; and she had lived on the best terms with her husband, undisturbed with jealousy, notwithstanding his being an Italian.

Her talent for raillery she managed with such address, as to render it entertaining in general, without being offensive in particular. Mere dull, downright scandal, which had no object but the gratification of malice, she detested, and considered the circulation of every story to the disadvantage of others, as inexcusable even although founded in truth. When a connection of a particular kind subsisted between two people, of different sexes, nobody was more quick than Signora Sporza in perceiving it; yet she was never heard to give the least hint of her knowledge or suspicion of such an intrigue. If the parties met openly at her assemblies, she received them with her usual politeness; if either of them made her acquainted with their intimacy, she would not suffer them to visit her afterwards. She never would be the confident of a love intrigue; because accessaries, she said, were as guilty as the principals, with far less temptation; besides, she added, as the loving couple generally quarrel afterwards, and sometimes go the length of hating each other, part of this hatred may extend to those who encouraged their connection.

Another of this lady's maxims was, that nothing should ever be told concerning one friend of another, particularly to a husband of his wife, or to a wife of her husband, which would give them pain to know. If what is told is false, all the world agrees, that the tale-bearer has done a very ill thing; and if it happens to he true, in Signora's Sporza's opinion, a much worse; for a malicious falsehood,

said she, ceases to do harm when the truth comes to be known, but the mischief attending a malicious truth is more durable. Jealousy, whether well or ill-founded, she considered as the greatest plague of society; a jealous husband or wife she thought the most odious of all odious animals, and as carefully to be excluded from good company as mad people or cut-throats. She had no scruple in declaring that, in her opinion, the man was devoid of principle who intrigued with any gentlewoman, however willing she might be, before such gentlewoman was provided with a husband, or at least within a very short time of being so: and she thought *that* man was very little better who did not take due precautions to prevent his intercourse with a woman of reputation from becoming public, even although the lady was married.

As Signora Sporza had no favourable opinion of Zeluco from her first acquaintance with him, and even strongly suspected the nature of his views on Laura; it will seem extraordinary, that she did not communicate these suspicions to Laura, or to Madame de Seidlits, for both of whom her esteem and affection hourly increased;—the truth is, it was this very affection that prevented her. She expected to make Zeluco's attachment to Laura, and his influence with the minister, of service to her friends in other schemes which she meditated for their benefit; but she saw plainly from the avowed principles and undeviating conduct of both the mother and daughter, that on the slightest idea of his views on Laura, they would renounce all connection with Zeluco, and spurn at every advantage that could attend it. Having a very high opinion, therefore, of Laura's prudence, on which she relied much, and believing in her aversion to the man, on which she relied more, she permitted him quietly to proceed in his scheme, convinced however that he would be successful only in promoting her's.

There certainly was little delicacy in Signora Sporza's way of thinking on this, and some other subjects; and as she was of a friendly benevolent disposition, and possess-

ed some excellent qualities, it is to be regretted that they were intermingled with any of baser alloy.

Our only reason for describing men and women as animals of heterogeneous composition, made up of bad as well as good materials, is, that we have hitherto always found them so; but we shall be happy to delineate uniform and perfect characters as soon as we have the good fortune to meet their prototypes in nature. There is room to fear, however, that they are as difficult to find as they would be agreeable and easy to describe; and that the race of those perfect beings incapable of weakness and invulnerable to vice, who are ever armed at all points, and cased in virtues as the knights of chivalry were in mail, has entirely failed, as well as that of those tremendous giants, void of every virtue, and replete with every vice, who lived in the same ages;—till these opposite extremes, men entirely good or completely wicked appear again, we must be contented with that mediocrity of character which prevails, and draw mankind as we find them, the best subject to weaknesses, the worst embued with some good quality.

In a character, such as that of the person whose story we have the unpleasant task of recording, there are, perhaps, fewer good qualities than in any other, because the basis of Zeluco's character was cruelty, at least a total disregard to the feelings of his fellow-creatures, when any interest or gratification of his own was in question.

This disposition of the mind, we conceive, admits of fewer good qualities, and is connected with a greater number of bad than any other of which human nature is susceptible.—Montaigne, indeed, has said, '*Nature a (ce crains-je), elle même attaché à l'homme quelque instinct à l'inhumanité.*' * But it is to be hoped, that the instinct he mentions belongs only to devils, and that a *disinterested* pleasure in the sufferings of others exists not even in the most wicked of human breasts. It is sufficiently deplorable, that any of mankind are capable of pursu-

* Essais de Montaigne, livre xi, chap. 11.

ing what they consider as their own interest, and sometimes interest of a very frivolous nature, at the expense of extreme misery to their fellow-creatures. The proofs, however, of this degree of cruelty need not be drawn from the stories of giants, and records of chivalry; they are frequently found in more authentic history, and may be adduced from the conduct of too many of the heroes and great men of antiquity: not to mention the great men of our own days, whose sentiments and conduct, however different from those of the former in every other respect, have a wonderful resemblance to their predecessors, in this article of insensibility and disregard of the misery of others.

CHAPTER XXX.

A perfidious Attempt.

As Zeluco now found more frequent opportunities than ever of being in company with Laura, he continued his assiduities with increased zeal, and strove by every means of insinuation with which he was acquainted to gain her good opinion: but with all the pains he took and the art he used, her behaviour to him never exceeded the bounds of common politeness, and sometimes a kind of politeness which savoured a little of dislike.

Although few men had less tenderness than Zeluco for the self-love of others, none could feel more exquisitely when their own was wounded; he perceived Laura's indifference with indignation, and would have endured it with still more impatience, had he not found a balsam to alleviate the smart in the very root from whence it sprung. His vanity, while it made him feel the indifference of Laura, persuaded him that she was deficient in penetration, and did not relish the graces with which he thought himself adorned, as women of taste usually did. '*L'amour propre*,' as Rochefoucault finely observes, '*empêche bien que celui qui nous flatte soit jamais celui qui nous*

flatte le plus.' It might be thought that this mean opinion of Laura's taste would tend to diminish the force of his attachment to her; but we must remember that Zeluco's love was entirely sensual; he thought Laura's face the most beautiful, and her person the most piquant, he had ever seen. The qualities of her mind he regarded not.

The attentive and complaisant manner in which Madame de Seidlits always behaved to him convinced him that he enjoyed *her* good opinion; he perceived also, that she had a taste for show and magnificence, and was a little out of countenance sometimes on account of the want of those superfluities which custom has rendered almost necessaries in a certain rank of life. On this weakness he founded an opinion, that, with proper management, she might be gradually brought to wink at the connection he wished to form with her daughter; a piece of complaisance, however shocking, which he had already met with in more than one instance.

He resolved therefore to begin his horrid design by fixing an obligation of an important nature on her, unknown both to her daughter and Signora Sporza: he waited on her one forenoon when he knew the two other ladies were abroad; and preluding what he had to propose with many apologies, he said, ' That the high esteem he had for her, and the sincere concern he took in her interest, had prompted him to make some inquiry into her circumstances; and that he was much grieved to find they were so ill proportioned to her merit. As your husband,' continued he, ' belonged to another service, I find it will be difficult to have this remedied by the bounty of this court; but you will oblige me infinitely (especially if you will agree to keep it a secret from every other person without exception) by permitting me to be your banker for an annual sum, till such time at least as your own affairs are better arranged. So saying, he presented her with a note of very considerable value.

The blood mounted into Madame de Seidlits's face at this proposal, and she immediately replied, with an air of

surprise and displeasure, that she was sorry he had taken the trouble of making an inquiry of such a nature; that he had received an erroneous account of her affairs, which were not in a situation to justify her in accepting assistance of that kind from any person; but more particularly from one with whom she had no natural connection. She added, that she should always have a proper sense of the obligation which, unexpected and unsolicited on her part, he had already conferred on her; but she was determined to be exceedingly cautious of permitting a load to be increased which she had already felt too heavy for her to bear without great uneasiness. Having said this she withdrew, throwing such a look at Zeluco as his conscious heart interpreted into a suspicion of his base design. He remained sometime fixed to the spot, and then returned to his own house in much disturbance of mind.

He was now convinced that he had made a false estimate of the character of Madame de Seidlits; that he had betrayed his scheme on her daughter, and dreaded that he should be deprived of the pleasure of visiting her any more, without which he felt he could enjoy little comfort or repose.

After much reflection, and after forming and rejecting various plans to remove the effects of this rash step, and reinstate himself in the good opinion of Madame de Seidlits, he at length sent her the following letter.—

'I am much afraid, my dear madam, that I have offended your delicacy by my proposal this morning, which I am now convinced was made in too abrupt a manner, owing to my having received some vexatious news of a domestic nature, which will oblige me to embark for Messina within a few days; having little expectation of returning to Naples, I grasped too eagerly at the happiness of serving a person I so highly esteem, and whom there is reason to fear I shall never see again. I hope you will forgive my precipitate zeal; for however just your reasons may be for rejecting the satisfaction aimed at, I hope you

will never have any for denying some share of your regard to him who is, with the highest esteem, and the warmest prayers for your happiness, madam, your most obedient, and most humble servant,

'ZELUCO.'

Although Madame de Seidlits's pride had been alarmed by Zeluco's proposal, she had no suspicion that it was dictated by any base motive; and therefore she was not without uneasiness even before receiving this letter, lest she had behaved with too much loftiness to a well-meaning and friendly man. She became entirely of this opinion the moment she perused the letter; her candid mind was filled with remorse for her own behaviour, and sorrow for his threatened departure.

She directly sent him a letter, apologizing for her behaviour, and entreated him not leave Naples without seeing her once more.

CHAPTER XXXI.

— Tamen ad mores natura recurrit
Damnatos, fixa et mutari nescia.—

JUV. SAT. xiii, 239.

WHEN Signora Sporza and Laura returned from their airing, Madame de Seidlits informed them, that Zeluco had paid her a visit, and that he intended to leave Naples. She mentioned this in such a manner that they naturally thought the sole design of his visit had been to acquaint her with his sudden departure; this she did to prevent any inquiry concerning the real motive of his visit, which, in compliance with Zeluco's request, she intended to conceal.

Signora Sporza was greatly surprised at Zeluco's sudden resolution; it appeared unaccountable to her, who was convinced his affections centered at Naples, and did not believe that any business would appear of sufficient im-

portance in the eyes of his character and fortune, to draw him from the place where his affections were fixed.

Laura was uneasy because she saw her mother so; for independent of that circumstance, she would have been pleased with the departure of a man whose company was disagreeable to her.

The reader needs not be informed that Zeluco had no intention of leaving Naples, and that the story of vexatious news, which obliged him to embark for Sicily, was an invention, calculated to remove all suspicion of his real plan from the mind of Madame de Seidlits, and to convince her, that his proposal could be dictated by pure benevolence alone; for if, previous to making it, he had already formed the resolution of quitting Italy, with no view of returning for several years, and little chance of ever seeing her or her daughter again, the offer must have been well intended, whether she thought it became her to accept it or not.

But it was necessary that he should seem in earnest before he sent the letter to Madame de Seidlits; therefore he announced his intention to the domestics of his own family, ordered several things to be prepared and packed up, called in his debts, ordered inquiry to be made about a proper vessel for transporting him and his suite: In short, he acted his part so well, that none of his acquaintance, except Signora Sporza, had any doubts of his intention.

When Zeluco received Madame de Seidlits's answer to his letter, he began to resume his old opinions; his mind, habituated to hypocrisy and deceit, could not enter into the natural movements of an honest heart, apprehensive of having acted ungenerously, and throbbing with eagerness to make reparation; he imagined her answer displayed an inclination to accept of his offer, and thought her stately behaviour had been assumed on purpose to enhance the value of her future acquiescence, or perhaps was a temporary triumph, with which the good lady chose to indulge her vanity; but having been driven to immo-

diate decision by the unexpected news of his departure, she was now ready to capitulate on reasonable terms.

He did not continue long in this way of thinking; for, when he waited on her the following day, and, Madame Seidlits having repeated her apology for the coolness of her behaviour at their last interview, he began to hint, though in a distant way, at a renewal of his former proposition, he was immediately stopt short, by her rejecting it with equal firmness, though with less anger than at first. She added, in the most obliging manner, that she had taken the liberty of requesting to see him; because she could not bear the thoughts of his leaving Naples after such a cold interview as their last, without expressing that sense of gratitude which she should ever retain for his goodness to her on a late occasion, and without wishing him a good voyage.

There was so much virtuous dignity and unaffected candour and benevolence in the whole of her discourse and deportment, as overawed his insidious tongue, and checked every presumptuous hope that began to spring up in his breast.

At his taking leave, Madame de Seidlits, with some degree of solemnity and fervour, said, 'Heaven direct you, sir, wherever you go, and bless you with all the prosperity and success which your disinterested conduct and benevolent character deserve.' The conscience of Zeluco smote him at this petition, and he felt a pang sharp as the stiletto of the Portuguese.

Disappointed, humbled, and self-condemned, in broken accents, and with a faultering tongue, he was withdrawing, without having the assurance once to pronounce the name of Laura, when Signora Sporza and that young lady entered the room; even then he was unable to recover himself so far as to address them in his usual manner; after bowing to each, without uttering a word, he hurried out of the room.

His agitation spoke more powerfully in his favour with Madame de Seidlits, than he could himself have done had

he been ever so cool and recollected; that confusion which proceeded from disappointment, perfidy, and conscious guilt, she imputed to the sensibility of a benevolent heart, on being separated from friends, without the hope of seeing them again for a long time.

Laura, without being so fully convinced of its justice, acquiesced in the construction of her mother.

Signora Sporza could not account in a satisfactory manner for the behaviour of Zeluco, but she was too much convinced of the selfishness of his disposition, to believe that he could be much affected with any thing unconnected with his own personal interest or pleasure.

He was under the necessity of continuing the preparations for his departure for some days; but on the arrival of the first vessel from Sicily, he pretended that he had received letters, informing him that the business which required his presence was happily and unexpectedly terminated; so that his voyage was no longer necessary.—This news he allowed to reach the ladies in the common course of circulation, fearing that their delicacy might be hurt by his sending a formal message to acquaint them with it; as that would imply his thinking his motions of more importance to them, than they might incline to have believed; but on his waiting on them a few days after, he was highly pleased when Madame de Seidlits chid him for omitting to send her a piece of intelligence which gave her much pleasure. He looked at Laura, in hopes of her shewing marks of agreeing with her mother; but as she felt differently, she seemed as if she had not heard what her mother had said. Signora Sporza, looking slily at Zeluco, said, 'I am less surprised than my friend, having all along had a prepossession that something would occur to prevent this voyage.'

CHAPTER XXXII.

The importance of a Man to himself.

Zeluco was now on a better footing than ever with Madame de Seidlits, visited her more frequently, and became more and more enamoured of her daughter. The natural gracefulness of her manner, the lively good sense of her conversation, and the winning sweetness of her temper, would have attracted the admiration of every man of sentiment, although these qualities had been connected with a face and person of the common kind. Even in the eyes of Zeluco, sunk as he was in sensuality and debased by vice, the filial affection, the graceful modesty, and benevolent heart of this amiable young woman gave additional poignancy to those external beauties which hitherto he had esteemed as all that is valuable in woman.

From the observations which Zeluco had made on the conduct of mankind, confirmed by what passed within his own breast, his opinion was, that virtue was mere varnish and pretext; and whatever apparent disinterestedness, generosity, or self-denial, there were in the conduct of any person, that if the whole could be chymically analyzed and reduced to their original elements, self-interest would be found at the bottom of the crucible; he was, besides, of a suspicious temper, and convinced that, for the most of their actions, mankind have secret reasons very different from the ostensible. If, therefore, the motive announced was of a generous or disinterested nature, he never believed it to be the real one, but turned his eyes in search of a motive where self-interest predominated.

In the present case, not being able to conjecture any advantage that could accrue to Laura, from behaving with so much reserve to him, (as to disliking him, he thought that impossible), nor any benefit which Madame de Seidlits could derive from rejecting his proposal, especially as he had annexed no condition to it; he laboured to discover what could impel two women who were not

devoid of common sense to act in such an irrational manner. And after much deliberate reflection, he at length imputed the whole of their conduct to a scheme concerted between the mother and daughter, with the aid of Signora Sporza, to take advantage of his passion for Laura, and, by assumed dignity in the one, and reserve in the other, to allure him into a marriage.

Replete with this notion he determined to be more sparing in his attentions to Laura, to pay his court with ostentatious assiduity to a young lady of family and considerable beauty then at Naples; and by alarming Madame de Seidlits and Laura with jealousy, and the fear of losing him for ever, induce them both to more complaisance.

He acted the part he intended so well, that within a short time it was generally believed at Naples, that a treaty of marriage was on foot between Zeluco and the young lady in question; and he took particular care that Signora Sporza and her two friends, should have more reason than others to be convinced of the truth of this report.

In requital for the pains he gave himself in his new assumed character, he had the vexation to perceive, that those of all his acquaintance who took the least interest in his behaviour, and in the news he had circulated, were precisely the persons he wished to affect the most; that Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza heard and believed it with the most perfect indifference; and if there was any alteration observable in the behaviour of Laura, it was that she seemed a little gayer than formerly.

Finding that a stratagem, which he imagined would have greatly disconcerted the supposed scheme of the ladies, and produced something favourable to his own views, had entirely failed, he now thought proper to relax in his assiduities to the young lady in question, and renew them to her whom, for some time, he seemed to have abandoned.

He was the more eager to return to his former society

at Signora Sporza's, as he understood that Mr. N——, the English gentleman formerly mentioned, spent a great deal of his time with her, and in the company of Madame de Seidlits and Laura. He could hardly indeed allow himself to imagine that any woman who had eyes, could prefer this Englishman to himself; yet, recollecting that the tastes of women are wonderfully capricious, he felt some sensations of jealousy on hearing of the visits of Mr. N——. Having prepared a plausible story to account for his late absence, and what he thought a mighty well-turned apology, he again waited on Madame de Seidlits. He had no opportunity, however, of pronouncing his apology, for as no notice had been taken by Laura, or her relations, of his retreat, the same inattention was paid to his return. He was received as if he had passed the preceding evening with them; and Signora Sporza saying, just as he was about to make his apology,—This is lucky enough, as N—— cannot be with us; we were in want of somebody to form our party. Pray, signor, draw a card.

Baffled in all his plans of seduction, his usual amusements becoming insipid, and his former pleasures nauseous; feeling himself incapable of any enjoyment out of the company of Laura, the obdurate and haughty spirit of Zeluco was obliged to relinquish every idea of obtaining the object of his wishes by, what he called, conquest, and to think of proposing articles of union.

This last recourse was the more mortifying to him, as it was a favourite maxim of his, that no man in his senses would ever think of entering into the state of matrimony, but by the door of wealth, or with the view of using it as the ladder of ambition; yet impelled by desires which he could not gratify on other terms, he now found himself obliged to sue for admission into that state without the attractions of either wealth or ambition.

After a long internal struggle, he at last waited on the mother of Laura, and without much ceremony or circum-

locution, for he had not the least doubt of success, he acquainted her with his honourable intentions respecting her daughter. Few things could have been more agreeable to Madame de Seidlits than such a proposal.

During the first violence of her grief and dejection of spirits on her husband's death, she felt the diminution of her fortune as an inconsiderable evil after so great a misfortune; but now that the sharpness of her sorrow was somewhat blunted by time, she began to be more sensible of the inconveniences and mortifications attendant on narrow circumstances.

Her husband, like most Germans, was fond of show, and had encouraged his wife in a more expensive style of life than he could well afford. She herself, in other respects of a very amiable character, was not without vanity; she was desirous that her house, furniture, and equipage, should not only be genteel but splendid. It is not surprising, therefore, that the minute economy which was absolutely necessary in her present circumstances should be highly disagreeable to her, even on her own account, but still more so on account of her fondness for Laura, whom she eagerly wished to see possessed of all the elegances of life, and for whose smallest pleasure she was ever ready to sacrifice any gratification of her own; indeed all her own gratifications, even those of her vanity, were more sensibly enjoyed by her in the person of her daughter than in her own.

As Madame de Seidlits foresaw that Laura's marriage with Zeluco would probably be accompanied with many conveniences to herself, would put her beloved daughter into that state of affluence and splendour which so well became her, and as Zeluco was a man of whom she had a good opinion, she heartily rejoiced at the proposal which he made. Having therefore in polite terms thanked him for his good opinion of her daughter, she said she would inform her of his proposals, and then leave the matter to her own decision.

'That is all I wish, madam,' said Zeluco.

'For,' continued Madame de Seidlits, 'Laura's dutiful behaviour gives her a claim to the utmost indulgence, and her excellent understanding renders it improper for me *strongly* to influence, far less to controul her on such an occasion.'

'Controul!' repeated Zeluco; 'have you reason to think your daughter's affections are already engaged?'

'I know they are not,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'had that been the case, I should have begun by telling you so.'

'Then, madam,' said Zeluco, 'it is to be hoped there will be no need of controul.'

Madame de Seidlits was not so sure of Laura's agreeing to Zeluco's proposal as he seemed to be, and therefore had spoken in doubtful terms, which he thought unnecessary, and a little ridiculous.

Having obtained leave to make his proposals to Laura herself, he withdrew, fully convinced that they would be most acceptable; but somewhat abashed, that to arrive at the wished-for goal, he was under the necessity of taking the detested road of matrimony.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Maternal Affection.—Filial Duty.

That very evening Madame de Seidlits took occasion to mention Zeluco to Laura, in terms agreeable to the good opinion she had formed of him, and the gratitude which she felt for the good office he had done her; and then added, 'she was convinced he would make a good husband.'

'Perhaps he might,' said Laura, 'to a woman who loved him.'

'A man of generosity and worth must command the esteem of a virtuous woman,' answered Madame de Seidlits; 'and that, my dear, is often a stronger pledge of happiness in the married state, than the fantastical notions some women form of love.'

Alarmed at the significant manner with which Madame de Seidlits pronounced this;—Laura, looking earnestly at her mother, cried, 'Heavens! what does this mean?—has Signor Zeluco—surely he cannot think—'

'Yes, Laura,' said Madame de Seidlits, 'he thinks of you, and you only;—and this day he offered to make you mistress of his hand and fortune.'

The blood immediately forsook Laura's face; she became as pale as snow, and seemed ready to faint.

'My dearest child,' exclaimed Madame de Seidlits; 'what is the matter?'

'Oh! mother,' said Laura, in a feeble voice, 'will you give me to a man I cannot love?—will you order your Laura—?'

'How can you talk so, child,' said the mother; 'when did I order you?'

'Alas!' said Laura, 'is not every indication of your wishes obeyed as an order by me?'

'For which reason,' replied Madame de Seidlits, 'I have no wishes but those which you can with pleasure obey.'

'It has been the happiness of my life,' said Laura, 'to obey,—to anticipate your wishes, when it was in my power; but can you wish me married to a man whom I cannot love? or would you make such a requital to the person who has obliged you, as to give him a wife without fortune, and without the least affection, without even—'

'For heaven's sake, my dear, do not talk in that manner,' interrupted Madame de Seidlits; 'you well know, I can desire nothing but what is for your good; but I beg you may hear me calmly; your decision on this matter is of great importance: you must be sensible of the sad reverse of fortune which has befallen you by the death of your father; his rising prospects in the army, his generous spirit, and above all his love for us both, has accustomed you to a style of life very different from what our present circumstances can support. In the

meanwhile, Signor Zeluco, a man of a friendly and benevolent character, and of a vast fortune, offers you his hand, and is ready to rescue you from all the inconveniences of poverty, and to place you in a state of affluence which you never before experienced. But you say, you do not love him.—Well, if that continues to be the case, there is no more to be said; I shall never desire you to give your hand to a man whom you cannot love;—but I fear, my dear, you are misled by false and romantic notions on that head.'

'Is there any thing unreasonable or romantic,' said Laura, 'in refusing my hand to a man who in no degree interests my heart. But you have alluded to the inconveniences of our present confined circumstances,—as affecting *me* in a more *particular* manner. I know not,' continued Laura, 'if I understood my mother right?'

'The narrowness of our circumstances is a source of unhappiness to me *on your account only*,' replied Madame de Seidlits.

'From this moment then, my dear madam, let that source be dried up,' said Laura, 'for our present circumstances, confined as they are, give me no uneasiness; and be assured, that if you can bear them cheerfully, all the inconveniences attending them are bliss to me, in comparison with affluence as the wife of Zeluco.'

'Well, my dearest girl, I have done; you have said enough, and more than enough;—you shall never again hear him mentioned as a lover by me.'

'My dear mother,' cried Laura, with tears of affection, 'how can I requite you for this goodness?'

'By following the dictates of your own virtuous heart,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'be you happy, my dear child, and I am contented.'

'I *am* happy!' exclaimed Laura, throwing her arms around her mother's neck; 'how can I be but happy while I am blessed with such a parent?'

Madame de Seidlits then informed her daughter, that Zeluco had desired to have an audience of her by himself,

in which he would make his proposals; which she had agreed to.

Laura begged with earnestness, that her mother would take on herself the office of acquainting Zeluco with her determined sentiments. But Madame de Seidlits urged her promise, and that Zeluco might consider himself as disrespectfully used, adding, with a smile, you must allow me, my dear, to carry one point in this negotiation. Laura acquiesced, and next morning mustered up all her resolution for a scene, which she thought on with a good deal of uneasiness.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Si on croit aimer sa maîtresse pour l'amour d'elle on est bien trompé.
ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO called at Madame de Seidlits's the day following: After he had waited a few minutes alone, Laura entered the room pale and in evident emotion, without looking him in the face, pointed to a chair, and desired him to be seated, placing herself at the same time at a respectful distance.

'No doubt,' said he, 'your mother has informed you, madam, of the sentiments with which your beauty and merit have inspired me, and with the purport of this visit.'

'She has, sir,' said Laura, 'and I am sensible of the honour your good opinion does me; the obligation you conferred on my mother demands, and has my warmest gratitude;—but—'

Zeluco, construing Laura's confusion in his own favour, stepped across the room, seized her shrinking hand, and exclaimed, 'Talk not of gratitude for trifles, my whole fortune is now at your disposal; and you will, I hope, name an early day that the rites of the church may unite us for ever.'

The security implied in this abrupt address offended the delicacy and roused the spirits of Laura; she disengaged her hand, and throwing an indignant look at Zelu-

co, said, 'Carry your fortune, sir, to some woman more desirous and more deserving of it; I have claim to share it with you on neither account.'

Zeluco, surprised and piqued at her manner, answered, 'I am sorry you seem offended, madam; I hope there is nothing in the proposal I have made to hurt your pride.'

'Without giving grounds for an accusation of pride,' replied Laura, 'I may be surprised at being pressed to fix a day for a purpose I never agreed to, and never shall.'

'I understood, madam, that your mother had been so obliging as to explain my sentiments and plead my cause; having her approbation, I flattered myself I should have yours, and that you would be willing to abridge unnecessary delay.'

'My mother, sir, has a warm and grateful heart, and is penetrated with a sense of your services on a late occasion; I hope I also have becoming sentiments on that head, of which the best proof I can give, is by assuring you at once, that it is not in my power to repay the partiality you express for me in the manner you desire. I hope, therefore, you will here terminate a pursuit which must be vain, and is so little worth your while.'

'I was informed, madam,' said Zeluco, 'that your heart was disengaged.'

'You were informed rightly,' said Laura.

'What then are your *objections* to me?' said he.

'Since the reasons which determine me,' said Laura, 'seem valid to those to whom I think myself accountable, I must be excused from an explanation to any other person.'

The possibility of his honourable proposals being rejected, had never once entered into the contemplation of Zeluco; on the contrary, he was convinced that all her former reserve was assumed for no other purpose but to allure him to this point; on finding them refused in so decided a manner, his heart swelled with anger, which he could with difficulty suppress.

Laura, perceiving the struggle, added, 'I do not mean to offend you, sir; but I think it my duty, on such an occasion, to assure you, that my determination is unalterable. I sincerely wish you happiness with a more deserving woman.'

'You are infinitely obliging, madam,' said he, his eyes flashing with rage.

'I must beg to be excused from attending you any longer,' said she, retiring with some degree of precipitation.

She was no sooner gone, than Zeluco struck his clenched fist twice, with frantic violence, on his forehead, and rushed out of the house, before Madame de Seidlits, who meant to have waited on him, had time to reach the room.

The grateful heart of this well-disposed lady was hurt when she understood that Zeluco had left her house in so much displeasure; and even after hearing her daughter's account of the scene which had passed between them, she thought that Laura ought to have softened her refusal, and borne more calmly those signs of vexation and disappointment which Zeluco had displayed; 'which, after all, my dear,' added Madame de Seidlits, 'are proofs of his love.'

'They might have been mistaken for marks of hatred,' said Laura, 'and could not have been more disagreeable to me had I known them to be really such.'

When Zeluco returned to his own house, he poured out a thousand execrations against the sex in general, and the pride and folly of Laura in particular; abused his servants, and displayed many of those ridiculous extravagances, which wounded vanity and disappointment prompt men of peevish and passionate tempers to exhibit. But after having sworn, raged, stamped, bounced, and blasphemed for two hours together, he recollected at last, what was very obvious from the first, that these extravagances would not bring him nearer his object; the fermentation excited by this unexpected disappointment settled in a gloomy reserve, during which he avoided so-

ciety, and passed great part of his time in meditating some scheme for getting Laura into his power, that he might at once satisfy his desires and his revenge.

He once thought of causing her to be seized, forced aboard a vessel, and of passing over with her to Tunis. And he had some conversation with a bold enterprising fellow, who commanded a trading vessel, then at Naples, was well acquainted with the Barbary coast, and had lived a considerable time at Tunis; this man, Zeluco had first become acquainted with at Palermo, and had taken great pleasure in listening to his adventures. He sent for him on the present occasion, and, stating a case from which the seaman could not guess at the scheme he meditated, he sounded him with respect to the practicability of some such plan.

But while his mind was agitated with this villanous project, he occasionally visited Madame de Seidlits, who, by the complacency of her behaviour to him, endeavoured, as much as lay in her power, to compensate for that of Laura, which she could not help thinking had been too harsh to a person who had conducted himself in so obliging a manner to them both. And she made no scruple of declaring to him, that she would have been better pleased that Laura had listened more favourably to his suit; which possibly might be the case at some future period. She advised him, however, not to urge her farther at present; adding, that she would acquaint him as soon as she perceived any change in the sentiments of Laura in his favour.

This discourse of Madame de Seidlits tended to turn the mind of Zeluco from the mad and vindictive projects with which it was occupied, the difficulties and danger of which also became more apparent to himself as he cooled.

But still feeling himself in an awkward and mortified situation, and unable to suppress the over-boilings of wrath and indignation at the sight of Laura, he determined on making another tour through Italy, and perhaps through France, in the hopes that a variety of ob-

jects would dissipate his vexation from the constant contemplation of one. When he arrived at Rome, he endeavoured to extinguish a passion which gave him unremitting pain, by plunging into that current of dissipation and debauchery from which he had of late abstained. This expedient had no better effect than his rage, execrations, and blasphemy had formerly produced. Invited to every splendid assembly and magnificent entertainment, indulging every gratification of sense, he *seemed* to be passing his days in joy, and his nights in pleasure; but was in reality the victim of chagrin and of disgust. His passion appeared to gain fresh force from the efforts made to subdue it; and the lovely form of the virtuous Laura, ever present in his mind, obscured even in his vitiated imagination all the allurements of those meretricious charms by which he endeavoured to efface it.

Unable to pursue his original plan, or to support a longer absence from Laura, after pouring out a fresh torrent of execrations against her, he sent an apology to the Cardinal B——, with whom he was engaged to dine, ordered post-horses, and returned to Naples with the rapidity of a courier.

Madame de Seidlits received him with her usual politeness, but gave no hint of any change of sentiment on the part of Laura. He had the additional mortification, in a short time, to find, that though the mother seldom allowed herself to be denied when he called, yet it frequently happened that Laura did not appear during the whole of his visit.

While Zeluco's aim was seduction, all that he had expected from Signora Sporza was connivance; when he was afterwards driven to the resolution of making proposals of marriage, he considered her mediation as unnecessary, being fully convinced that his terms would be accepted as soon as made. Disappointed in both his plans, and excessively galled at Laura's not appearing when he visited her mother, he again had recourse to Signora Sporza, spoke highly of his admiration of her young

friend, and ended a very pathetic harangue, by swearing, that his passion was, and had ever been, of the purest and most honourable nature.

'Of what other could it be, signor?' said she. 'Could any body suspect you wicked enough to attempt an affair of gallantry with a woman of birth, who is unmarried?'

He agreed that nothing could be more horrid than such an attempt; but that he had offered her his hand and fortune in the most respectful manner, which, to his great surprise and vexation, she had rejected.

'It is natural,' replied Signora Sporza, 'that you should be vexed on such an occasion; but there are so many instances of women refusing men who offer to marry them, that I see no reason for your being greatly surprised.' It was with difficulty that Zeluco could conceal the anger which glowed in his breast at this observation of Signora Sporza; after a short pause, however, he said, there was reason to fear that Laura had conceived a prejudice against him; and entreated of Signora Sporza, with whom he knew that Laura was quite confidential, to advise him what was the best method of removing this prejudice, and rendering her more favourable to his wishes.

'I know of no qualities,' replied Signora Sporza, 'by which a man has a greater chance of making a favourable impression on the mind of Laura, than by sincerity, good temper, and benevolence; and were I to offer an advice, it would be, that you should rely on these, and these only.'

Although Signora Sporza pronounced this with a serious countenance, the irony did not escape the observation of Zeluco; without seeming to take notice of it, he laid it up in his memory, and thanked her for her good counsel; adding, that he was sorry to perceive that Laura seldom appeared when he visited Madame de Seidlits; that probably this happened from her suspecting that he would renew his suit: he begged that Signora Sporza would assure her, that he intended not to tease her with

solicitations; but that he earnestly wished for the happiness of being received by Madame de Seidlits on the general footing of a friend; which he could not think was the case, when any of her family thought themselves obliged to be absent when he visited her.

Signora Sporza was so pleased with the apparent reasonableness and humility of this request, that the rancour and indignation which lurked in the breast of him who made it, entirely eluded her notice. She promised to acquaint her friends with what he had said; and the following day sent Zeluco an invitation to meet them both at her house.

Madame de Seidlits joined with Signora Sporza in representing to Laura, that there was no necessity for her behaving with peculiar reserve to Zeluco after the declaration he had made; and she agreed to behave as they required, without arguing the point; although she would have been infinitely better pleased to have kept herself secluded from the company of Zeluco.

Zeluco now had frequent opportunities of being in company with the object of his wishes. He passed whole evenings with the mother and daughter, attentively studied the characters of both, and endeavoured to adapt his behaviour, and every sentiment he uttered, to what he thought would please them most; and notwithstanding the restraint to which this obliged him to submit, he had, on the whole, a sensation in their company more agreeable than in any other society however jovial or voluptuous. And had not his own character been intrinsically vicious, the continuation of the self-command he was thus obliged to assume, and the efforts he made to please, might, perhaps, have effected a favourable change in his own disposition. For nothing is more powerful in alluring the heart of man to virtue, than the society of amiable, accomplished, and virtuous women.

CHAPTER XXXV.

—— Novas artes, nova pectore versat
Consilia.—— VIRG.

It was already remarked, that a portion of vanity formed part of the character of Madame de Seidlits, and sometimes obscured the lustre of her best qualities; she was apt too frequently in conversation to introduce the names of persons of very high rank, with whom her husband had been intimate in Germany, and who had occasionally visited her when she resided in that country. She paid a minute attention to the ornaments of her person, and sometimes adopted a style of dress which suited her better at an earlier period of her life. Having been distinguished for beauty in her youth, of which there were some remains, she seemed more pleased with the share which she still retained, than sensible that far the larger portion was fled. This error in calculation many women fall into who have not the good qualities of Madame de Seidlits to compensate it; for her general deportment was genteel and elegant, her temper cheerful and complacent, her disposition benevolent and generous.

In Laura Zeluco observed a depth of reflection, and solidity of understanding, which he thought incompatible with her sex, and which is very uncommon at her age. This was joined to an elegant simplicity of manner, and a total want of affectation, equally uncommon; ever ready to remark, and fond of displaying, the accomplishments of others, she seemed insensible of those with which she herself was so eminently adorned.

No daughter ever had a stronger sense than Laura of what she owed to her mother; the affectionate care and solicitude with which Madame de Seidlits had watched over her infancy, and the unceasing attention she bestowed on her through life, were, in the mind of this young lady, obligations never to be repaid; and independent of all sense of obligation or filial duty, she had a high esteem

for her mother's personal qualities. Neither gratitude nor esteem, however, prevented her seeing the weaknesses above enumerated; her clearness of sight was to her, in this particular, a source of uneasiness; and if she suspected any other person of being equally clear-sighted, she could not help feeling a temporary dislike to that person. As often as any of the little failings above enumerated began to make their appearance, she endeavoured, with all the address in her power, to turn away the attention of the company, and with theirs, she would have been glad had it been in her power to have turned away her own.

But it was her happiness to reflect upon, and her delight to display, every graceful and good quality that belonged to her mother. Easy even to indifference about the common forms of respect when they regarded herself, she had a jealous sensibility of the smallest neglect or want of attention to her mother.

Zeluco remarked this peculiarity in the character of Laura; he saw that the compliments he sometimes ventured to pay to herself were always heard with indifference, and sometimes with disgust, while every just and well-founded compliment paid to her mother seemed to give pleasure to the daughter; declining, therefore, the beaten road of insinuation, he tried to gain access to the heart of the one by the praises he bestowed on the other.

It behoved him, however, to be on his guard, in what manner and on what occasion, he risked his compliments; it was necessary that they should seem at once just and *à-propos*. He once mistook his aim so far as to compliment Madame de Seidlits for a quality she certainly did *not* possess, and was instantly warned of his error by such a glance of indignation from the expressive eye of Laura, as prevented his ever repeating it.

But as often as, on proper occasions, he remarked with justice and delicacy on the good and amiable qualities that *really* belonged to Madame de Seidlits, which he frequently did with equal penetration and address, it was evident that Laura listened with looks of more complacency than

she ever displayed when he spoke on any other subject. He acquired by study and use such a masterly manner of dwelling on this favourite theme, that Laura's aversion began to diminish; and she could not help feeling sentiments of approbation and good-will to the person who furnished her with so sweet a source of enjoyment.

This alteration in the sentiments of Laura was observed with more pleasure by her mother than by Signora Sporza, whose esteem for Laura and her dislike of Zeluco had increased with her acquaintance with both. Her dislike of the latter, however, did not proceed entirely from her own penetration; she had received such an account of him from a female correspondent at Palermo, as confirmed and greatly augmented her original bad opinion, and made her averse to the idea of his ever becoming the husband of her young friend, notwithstanding the temptation in point of fortune for such an alliance. But being convinced that her mentioning her sentiments on this subject to the mother or daughter, would prevent their ever again having any connection with Zeluco, she therefore was silent; at the same time determined, if it should be necessary, to speak in sufficient time.

But although Signora Sporza concealed from Madame de Seidlitz and her daughter the opinion she had of Zeluco, her real sentiments were detected by the jealous and penetrating eyes of the man himself. There is perhaps no sentiment which it is so difficult to conceal from the person who is the object of it, as violent hatred: a moderate adept in the art of dissimulation may impose on those for whom he feels no esteem, or whom he even holds in contempt; and, if he has an interest in it, may persuade them that he has a high respect or even veneration for them: and this, in some measure, accounts for so many people of the highest rank being ignorant of the true rate at which they are estimated. For the indications of contempt are easily restrained, and those of admiration as easily assumed: but it requires the powers of a finished hypocrite to hide hatred or aversion. Such

strong feelings it is difficult to controul, and prevent the discovering themselves by some involuntary appearan in the countenance or manner. It is not surprisin therefore, that Zeluco became fully convinced that Sign ra Sporza had a very unfavourable opinion of him, an was averse to his ever succeeding with Laura. The ra cour which gathered in his breast on this discover was of the most deadly kind; but he endeavoured to hid it till he should find a proper occasion of giving it vent and being, notwithstanding her sex, a better dissembl than Signora Sporza, he for a long time succeeded.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
A little, round, fat, oily man of God,
Was one I chiefly mark'd among the fry:
He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
If a tight damsel chaunc'd to trippen by;
Which when observ'd, he shrunk into his mew,
And straight would recollect his piety anew.

THOMSON.

ALTHOUGH Zeluco perceived with pleasure the chang which had taken place in Laura's behaviour to him, h did not choose to rely entirely on his own address; bu as he now believed, that he had no aid to expect fro Signora Sporza, he resolved to seek other allies, and eve attempted to draw them from the church itself, a quart in which one would think he had little interest.

Father Mulo was an ecclesiastic, more remarkable f the rigidity of his manners and opinions, than the dept of his intellects.—Father Pedro was a monk of a differen order, indulgent in his disposition, agreeable in convers tion, naturally shrewd, and what piety he possessed wa far from being of a morose kind. He had adopted th ecclesiastical profession from necessity not inclination and he endeavoured to assume an air of gravity and self

denial, which was equally discordant to the turn of his mind, the rotundity of his person, and to his rosy complexion, all of which announced him *Epicuri de grege porcus.* The warmth of Father Pedro's constitution had formerly drawn him into some scrapes, from which it required all his address to disengage himself, and rendered him exceedingly cautious ever after. He had behaved with peculiar circumspection ever since he had been at Naples; and being a man of more understanding than most of his brethren, he was chosen by Signora Sporza as her father confessor, and through her recommendation he now acted in the same capacity to her two friends, in preference to Father Mulo, who was their relation. In a short time, Father Pedro, whose manners were gentle and insinuating, gained the entire confidence of Madame de Seidlits, and was rather well thought of by her daughter. Father Mulo was by no means pleased with the choice his relations had made, yet as they behaved to him in all other respects with much deference and attention, no open breach took place between the father and any of them on this account.

Zeluco having informed himself of the character of those two monks, and knowing their connection with Madame de Seidlits, he thought it might be of importance to gain them to his interest.

He began with Father Pedro, whose favour he endeavoured to acquire by all the address and powers of insinuation he was master of, setting out by choosing him for his ghostly father; and to the gentle penance which he enjoined for the venial faults which Zeluco thought it expedient to confess, he frequently imposed upon himself a mulct in money, which he delivered into the hands of the father, to be applied to whatever pious use he thought proper

This behaviour on the part of Zeluco gave great satisfaction to Father Pedro, who not only received his visits with pleasure at his convent, but more frequently waited upon him at Zeluco's house.

After a pretty free repast, during which the father displayed much good humour and jovialness, Zeluco seizing what he thought a lucky moment, informed him of his passion for Laura.

This ghostly father assuredly had never imagined, that the sudden veneration which Zeluco professed for him, proceeded either from an admiration of his character or countenance; on the contrary, he had all along suspected its real source. He was not a man of very great delicacy of sentiment, and certainly was not troubled with prejudices of a superstitious nature; yet there were occasions on which he thought it expedient to affect as much terror for the horns of Satan as his brother Mulo was really impressed with. Zeluco had no sooner mentioned his passion for Laura, than the monk started as if a culverin had unexpectedly exploded at his ear, displaying as much astonishment and horror in his countenance, as if the devil had appeared before him in full uniform, with his cloven feet, longest tail, and largest pair of horns.

'What is the matter with you, my good father?' said Zeluco; 'do you perceive any thing unnatural or extraordinary in my desiring to be united in holy wedlock with a virtuous and beautiful young lady?'

The father, although he had long perceived Zeluco's fondness for Laura, had never heard of his proposing marriage to her, nor had he any idea that such was his intention. When Zeluco mentioned his love, the father took it for granted that he was about to request his aid on a different system; but finding that he really intended marriage, the monk began to imagine that he had played off his pantomime a little inadvertently, and was at a loss how to give a plausible account of his own affected surprise; he endeavoured to colour it, however, as well as he could, by saying, that as his business with Zeluco was of a spiritual nature, he could not help being very much surprised at the mention of a thing so different from what he was accustomed to have any concern in.

'I do humbly hope, my worthy father,' said Zeluco, 'that you will think you have a natural concern in this, as I can assure you my happiness not only in this world, but very possibly in the next, depends on my being able to prevail on this young lady to accept of my hand; for my heart is so fixed upon her, that I do not know what desperate measures I may be drove to if she continues obstinately to refuse me.'

The monk seemed to soften by degrees; Zeluco giving him a full account of the proposals he had made, the settlements he had offered, Laura's unaccountable obstinacy; and concluded by informing the monk, that he had laid apart a sum of money which, in case of success in his honourable proposals, he would request the father to accept, and appropriate to whatever pious or useful purpose he thought most expedient; but on this express condition, that it should remain an everlasting secret to all the rest of the world; 'because,' added he, 'an ostentatious display of such donations destroys, in my opinion, any little merit there may be in making them.'

The father agreed to this last condition with some seeming difficulty, praised Zeluco's modesty and charitable disposition, and finally assured him of all the assistance in his power. 'In the first place,' said he, 'I will use my influence out of friendship to you: secondly, From the regard I have for Madame de Seidlits, and the young lady herself, who so perversely opposes her own happiness; and lastly, and above all, I will use my interest in your favour for the sake of religion and the poor, as both must be benefited by the success of your honourable views.'

This ecclesiastic, partly from probity and partly from prudence, would have rejected a bribe to assist in any project which he thought wicked or unlawful, but he had no scruple in allowing himself to be well rewarded for doing what he approved, and would, of himself, have been happy to promote without any bribe at all.

Indeed he had no notion that Madame de Seidlits, or her daughter, had a serious intention of standing out a-

gainst a match which he thought so advantageous for both. He imputed their refusal to affectation, caprice, or a desire of indulging a few feminine airs; and he had a weaker opinion of Zeluco's understanding, on account of his being in this manner the dupe of a little female vanity.

And so impatient was he, that the *poor* should reap the fruits of Zeluco's promised liberality, that the first time he found Madame de Seidlits alone, he expressed much surprise that she had never told him of Zeluco's addresses to her daughter.

Madame de Seidlits replied, that after Laura had given her negative, she thought it best not to mention a subject which might be disagreeable to Signor Zeluco, and was so foreign to those in which the father was usually employed.

'It is true,' replied Pedro, 'I am principally interested in your spiritual concerns, but by no means indifferent to the temporal welfare of your family.'

Madame de Seidlits then informed him of all the particulars.

'I have such an opinion of Signora Laura's filial duty and affection,' said Pedro, 'that I am convinced, if you were to press this matter earnestly upon her, she would consent.'

'It is not impossible but she might,' said Madame de Seidlits, 'for which reason I shall be particularly careful not to press her.'

Father Pedro expressed astonishment at her taking so little concern in an affair of such importance to her daughter's happiness.

'It is because it is of so much importance to her happiness that I leave it to her own judgment,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'Laura is endowed with prudence and good sense, and she is certainly the best judge of her own feelings; if Zeluco ever becomes more agreeable to her, importunity would be superfluous; and if he does not, it would be cruel: besides, I have given her my word never to urge her on the subject, and I will assuredly adhere to my engagement.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.

For he a rope of sand could twist,
As tough as learned Sorbonist,
And weave fine cobwebs, fit for scull
That's empty when the moon is full;
Such as take lodgings in a head
That's to be let unfurnished.

BUTLER.

THE father was prevented from reply, by Laura's entering the room with Father Mulo. Before any account is given of the conversation which this venerable man introduced, it is necessary to throw a retrospective glance on incidents which occurred long before; from this an idea may be formed of the characters of Colonel Seidlits, and others, connected with our purpose.

Without recapitulating the circumstances by which the colonel and his lady became first acquainted, it is sufficient to observe, that their marriage took place before the father knew any thing of the matter; but he expressed infinite concern, and probably felt some, on hearing that his relation was the wife of a heretic. When she went with her husband to Germany, the zealous father continued from time to time to remind her in his letters, of the dangers she incurred in a land of heresy, and furnished her with the best arguments he had at his disposal, to enable her to adhere to the religion in which she was bred, stimulating her at the same time to attempt the conversion of her husband, by which she would acquire immortal glory, effect her husband's salvation, and secure to herself the comfort of his company both in this life and that which is to come.

The father being infinitely delighted with both the style and arguments of those letters, he could not deny himself the gratification of shewing copies of them to several of his acquaintance; and as the intention of shewing them could not be mistaken, his acquaintance in general were good-natured enough to praise them to the monk's con-

tentment; one old maiden aunt of Madame de Seidlits' however, whose zeal for religion and hatred to hereti increased with her years, seemed to approve of the co respondence less than any other person to whose inspe tion he had submitted it. When Father Mulo hinte this to her, she told him, that she was so provoked the odious heretic who had seduced her niece, that it w not in her power to wish in earnest for his conversion for she could not bear even to hear his name mentione and she was certain she should faint at the sight of hi whenever she met him, were it even in heaven.

But the father had too much ardour for making co verts, to follow the suggestions of this virgin; he ther fore continued to transmit such morsels of eloquence a in his opinion, could not fail to operate the conversion Colonel Seidlits.

But the reverend father's zeal being far more persp cuous than his arguments, Madame de Seidlits nev thought proper to communicate them to her husband while he, on his part, left his lady, without molestatio in the full enjoyment of her religious opinions, and at pe fect liberty to worship God in the manner which her co science approved. This he had promised when he ma ried her, and he would have thought it inconsistent wi honour to have tried to bring her over to his own pe suasion, even although he had been certain of succee ing. The colonel has been blamed for this by man zealous Protestants; we do not mean to approve or ce sure his conduct in this particular, but only mention th fact, leaving it to better judges to decide whether he w blameworthy or not.

Madame de Seidlits herself, who was pleased with a her husband's behaviour to her, was peculiarly delighte with what she called his delicacy on this point; an when Father Mulo insisted peremptorily, in one of hi letters, on knowing whether she had ever made any a tempt to convert her husband, or had shewn him th forcible reasoning contained in his letters to her; she wa

obliged to acknowledge that she had done neither, and gave for her reason, that her husband having left her at liberty on the subject of religion, she thought it would be a bad requital in her to tease him.

Father Mulo, in answer, endeavoured to demonstrate the weakness of that argument. It is not necessary to transcribe the whole of the father's letter; the following paragraph will, in all probability, be thought sufficient.—

'It was natural enough in you, my dear madam, to apprehend that your own arguments would be too feeble to convince your husband; but it is surprising that you do not perceive, that those I provided you with are of a very different nature: indeed, they are such as seldom fail to persuade even the weakest minds. From this you may judge what impression they would make on a person of such good sense as you describe your husband to be.

'You say, that it would be improper in you to tease *him*, because he never attempts to disturb *you*, nor allows any other person to trouble you on the subject of religion: but you do not distinguish, my dear madam, the great difference between the two cases. For your husband, indeed, to make any attempt, or to allow any to be made by others, for the purpose of seducing you from your religion to his, would not only be improper, but also highly criminal, and for this very sufficient reason, *because it is criminal to draw any person whatever from truth to falsehood.* But for you to labour, without ceasing, to prevail on your deluded husband, to abjure his own faith and adopt yours, is in the highest degree meritorious; *because it is highly meritorious to lead any person whatever, and far more a beloved husband, from falsehood to truth, or from darkness to light.*

'After having cleared up this point, I have only just to hint, that instead of reasoning upon what I inform you it is your duty to do, your safest course, my dearest cousin, will, for the future, be to perform it implicitly, for reasoning is by no means what you shine in: and, although you are generally allowed to be endowed with very

good common sense, and sufficient understanding to conduct common affairs; take my word for it, your immortal soul is of too much consequence to be intrusted in your own hands.'

This remonstrance had not the effect which, in Father Mulo's opinion, such forcible reasoning and such rational requests ought to have produced. What contributed, perhaps, to render Madame de Seidlits the more unwilling to touch on such subjects, was an incident of which she was informed about the very time when the monk was urging her so earnestly.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

No sooner could a hint appear,
But up he started to picqueer,
And made the stoutest yield to mercy,
When he engaged in controversy,
Not by the force of carnal reason,
But indefatigable teasing.

BUTLER.

A YOUNG Protestant clergyman, a distant relation of Colonel de Seidlits, came about this time to Berlin. He had applied himself with ardour to the study of controversy. He was distinguished by his wonderful faculty of creating disputes where they were least expected, and by his invincible courage in maintaining them when begun: he often asserted, and with truth, that he had never yielded an argument in his life. He was greatly admired for the flow of his pulpit eloquence, and the force of his reasoning, by all who were previously of his own opinion. The longer this happy ecclesiastic lived, he seemed to be the more confirmed in the favourable impression which, from his boyish years, he entertained of his own talents, and in his contempt for those of others; and became at length so powerful in self-conceit, that he would, without hesitation, have engaged a whole conclave of his adversaries, being convinced not only that he could overturn

all their arguments, but that the prejudices of education, the considerations of interest, and the allurements of ambition, must all yield to the irresistible strength of his demonstration.

This gentleman was sometimes invited to dinner by Colonel Seidlits, and was made welcome by his lady as often as she saw company in the evening.

In return for those civilities, he thought it incumbent on him to point out to her the absurdities of the Popish religion, as preparatory to her conversion to Calvinism. With this view he was apt to introduce questions of a controversial nature, and at one time threw out a sneer at the doctrine of transubstantiation in the presence of Madame de Seidlits.

This was repeated by one of the company to Colonel Seidlits, who, the next time he saw the clergyman alone, said to him mildly, 'I am not certain, my good sir, whether I ever informed you that my wife is of the Roman Catholic church.'

'You never informed me,' replied the other; 'but it is long since I knew that Madame de Seidlits had that misfortune.'

'You may, if you please, leave her misfortunes to those who are more naturally concerned in them,' said the colonel; 'but since you knew of what I was in hopes you had been ignorant, I own I am surprised that you could speak of one of the articles of her faith in the manner you did, in her presence.'

'I recollect what you allude to,' said the clergyman; 'but really the article in question is so absurd and incomprehensible, that it is impossible to mention it otherwise than in terms of derision.'

'Pray,' replied the colonel, 'do you believe in all the doctrines to be found in the public creeds and formularies of our own church?'

'That I do,' replied the divine; 'and would die at the stake, were it necessary, avowing them.'

'Then I hope you have a better reason for thinking

transubstantiation absurd, than merely its being incomprehensible?'

'There is no article in any of the Protestant creeds so incomprehensible as that you mention,' replied the divine.

'I did not know there were degrees in incomprehensibility,' said the colonel; 'if there is any proposition which I am quite unable to comprehend, it will be difficult to state another which I can comprehend less.'

'I will undertake to make you comprehend distinctly every article of the creeds you allude to,' said the divine, with an undaunted air.

'Rather than impose such a task upon you,' said the colonel, 'allow me to continue to believe them without fully comprehending them.'

'Well, colonel, you will do as you please, but surely it would afford you great satisfaction if your lady could be prevailed on to embrace the same religion that you profess.'

'No; I cannot say it would,' replied the colonel, coldly.

'Good God! that seems very unaccountable; will you be so good as to tell me your reason,' said the other.

'Because the thing cannot happen, sir, without either my changing my religion, and I intend no such thing, or by my endeavouring to persuade my wife to change her's, which I have solemnly promised never to do: besides, I am certain that Madame de Seidlits is an amiable woman, and a most excellent wife, with the religion she professes; and there is no knowing what alteration a change of sentiments might make.'

'What alteration, but a favourable one, can accrue from renouncing one of the worst religions in the world for the best?'

'As to which is the worst, and which the best,' said Seidlits, 'the world is much divided.'

'The Protestant religion is gaining ground every day,' said the clergyman; 'and there is reason to hope, that in a short time there will be more Protestants in the world than Papists.'

'That to be sure is very comfortable news,' said the

colonel; 'but it can have no great weight in the present argument; because, ever since the beginning of the world, there have been greater numbers devoted to false religions than to the true; and even now, if the question were to be decided by a plurality of voices, the religion of Mahomet might perhaps carry the palm both from the Protestant and Roman Catholic.'

'But you yourself are a Protestant;—*you at least* prefer the Protestant form of worship to all others,' said the clergyman.

'I certainly prefer no other form of worship to the Protestant,' replied the colonel.

'Then I would be glad to know,' said the clergyman, with a triumphant air, '*wherefore* you prefer no other?—the same arguments which convinced you might convince your lady?'

'No,' said the colonel; 'that they could not.'

'Why so?' said the clergyman. 'By what powerful arguments were you persuaded to adhere to the Protestant religion?'

'By this powerful argument,' replied the colonel, 'that I was born in Berlin, and bred at Koningsberg.'

'That answer smells of infidelity, colonel, and implies that you consider religion merely as an affair of geography, and of little or no importance in the world,' said the clergyman.

'It implies more than I intended then,' replied Seidlits; 'for although I do think that nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand of mankind are determined in the religion they profess by the place of their birth and education, I do not infer from thence, that religion is of no importance: on the contrary, I am convinced, that those who cherish religion, perform the relative duties of life in the most conscientious manner.'

'So you put all religions on the same footing?' said the clergyman.

'By no means,' answered Seidlits; 'I know indeed of no religion which does not inculcate morality; but as I

have not had any opportunity of observing the influence of other religions on men's conduct, I speak of the Christian religion only; which, if I am not mistaken, contributes greatly to render mankind better and happier even in this life.'

'You speak of the reformed religion, I presume,' said the clergyman; 'for as to the absurd tenets of the Roman Catholic creed, it is impossible for you, or any man of sense, to respect them.'

'I speak not of the creeds which, since the Christian era, have been composed by the fathers of either church,' replied the colonel; 'I have not leisure, perhaps not understanding sufficient to weigh or compare them with due precision. My observation regards only the precepts given, and the example set, by the Author of Christianity himself, and in which both churches are agreed. The good effect which a due impression of those divine precepts has upon the mind seems, I confess, very evident to me, whether the individuals on which it operates are Roman Catholics or Protestants.'

'That you, by accident, have met with Roman Catholics who were reckoned good moral men, I shall not dispute,' said the minister; 'but that any part of their goodness proceeded from their religion, is what I never can admit.'

'Why not?' said the colonel; 'the moral precepts of both religions are the same.'

'The spirit of those who profess them is very different, however,' resumed the minister. 'When did the Protestants display the same spirit of persecution that the Papists have so often done?'

'Let us remember,' replied Seidlits, 'that the church of Rome was established in power when the first reformers began to attack its doctrines; that an attack on its doctrines endangered the power and riches of its clergy. That it is natural for mankind, when they have long been in possession of power and wealth, to be exceedingly unwilling to relinquish them; and the clergy do not form an

exception to this general rule: they, as well as others, are apt to be extremely angry with those who attempt to dispossess them; besides, let us recollect, that all established governments think they have a right to use severities against revolting subjects, whatever good grounds those subjects have had for revolting,—and——'

'But remember,' interrupted the clergyman, 'the perfidy and cruelty displayed by the Roman Catholics in the massacre of St. Bartholomew—think of the shocking reign of the gloomy bigotted Philip, and the enormities of his unrelenting general the duke of Alva.'

'I do think of them with horror,' said the colonel, 'and I have no mind to palliate such dreadful instances of human wickedness and delusion. I only meant to hint, that those ought not to have credit for not displaying the same spirit who were not in possession of the same power. I am willing to believe, however, that with equal power they would not have committed equal excesses. Though I am sorry to say, that instances might be mentioned, which create a suspicion that more power would have perverted the spirit of some of the most distinguished reformers, and might possibly have the same effect on their successors. It is therefore fortunate for the clergy of Holland, Switzerland, some parts of Germany, and other countries in Europe, that there is little danger of their degenerating from that cause.'

'I doubt much whether that is a fortunate circumstance,' replied the clergyman; 'for although riches, power, and pomp have a mischievous effect when prostituted to the unworthy, yet they are suitable to the character we bear of the ambassadors of heaven, and might give more weight to our admonitions.'

'Power and wealth are the great corrupters of the human heart,' said Seidlits, 'and might spread their baneful influence even to the *ambassadors* themselves; in which event, in lieu of that spirit of toleration, benevolence, and humility, which distinguishes them at present; a great accession of power and riches might gradually inspire

them with pride and ambition, and render them at last little better than so many cardinals and popes.'

'Never, never,' cried the clergyman; 'the spirit of Protestantism is too averse to any such alteration.'

'The spirit of human nature, however, has a mighty tendency that way,' said Seidlits.

'Learning and deep reflection correct the depraved tendencies of our nature,' resumed the ecclesiastic, 'and leave the mind equally free from the degrading absurdities of superstition, and the impious sophistry of scepticism.'

'That is a state of mind devoutly to be wished,' said Seidlits.

'Is it not?' cried the parson, with exultation; 'you yourself allow that superstition is degrading to the mind of man,' continued he.

'I do,' replied the colonel; 'and the more readily, as I never said it was otherwise.'

'Well, I will now prove to you, that scepticism is as uncomfortable as the other is degrading: I hope you have no pressing business at present,' continued the parson, 'because, to put the subject in a clear light, it will be necessary to divide it into three heads, and then subdivide each of these into four principal branches.

'To begin then with the first and most important of those three heads.

'Any degree of doubt or uncertainty, particularly on matters of high importance, has been considered in all ages as irksome, and——'

'I ask pardon for interrupting you,' said the colonel; 'it is only to know whether you mean to prove, that to a well-disposed mind a state of certainty is more agreeable than any degree of doubt on religious subjects?'

'That is precisely what I am going to demonstrate,' resumed the parson.

'I will save you the trouble,' said Seidlits, 'for there is nothing of which I am more firmly convinced.'

'Is it not astonishing then,' said the other, 'that so many should be so foolish as to persevere in a state of uncomfortable doubt?'

'Very astonishing indeed,' said the colonel; 'especially as it is in every body's power to believe whatever will afford them most comfort.'

'I perceive,' said the parson, 'you have perused my treatise upon the faculty of believing.'

The colonel nodded.

'I there clearly prove, that the Roman Catholics have too much faith, and some sects of the Protestants too little; and then carefully point out the golden medium which mankind ought to adhere to.'

'It is very fortunate for mankind,' said the colonel, 'that *you* know it.'

'It is so,' resumed the parson; 'for of this happy medium it may be said, more emphatically than of any thing else, *nescire malum est.*'

'If I am not mistaken,' said Seidlits, 'an answer to your work was published by a certain French abbé, who, according to the custom of his countrymen, seemed very fond of jesting.'

'That was a most abominable, and a most provoking performance,' cried the parson with great vehemence; 'but jests are no arguments, colonel.'

'No; nor arguments are no jests,' said Seidlits; 'yet this provoking abbé endeavoured to make a jest of all your arguments.'

'There will be no jesting in hell, however,' said the parson, with a vengeful aspect.

'True,' said the colonel; 'when you have once got him there, the laugh will be on your side—'

'But pray, colonel,' resumed the minister, 'do you imagine that your lady has ever read my book.'

'I should rather think not,' said the colonel.

'What a pity!' exclaimed the other; 'it would go a great way to cure her of many prejudices.'

'The remedy would be rather violent,' said the colonel,

'Perhaps it might seem a little so at first,' rejoined the clergyman; 'but were I to converse with her on those subjects, I should begin in gentle terms.'

'That would be very proper,' said the colonel.

'The sooner I begin then the better,' said the parson; 'after I have talked with her for a few hours, she will be able to decide between the two religions on rational principles.'

'I have already decided, on what I think rational principles,' said the colonel, 'not to disturb her.'

'You have decided very erroneously,' resumed this persevering ecclesiastic.

'Let me entreat you, my good sir,' interrupted the colonel, 'not to interfere in my domestic concerns, but to mind your own business.'

'I beg leave to inform you, Colonel Seidlits,' said the clergyman, with a dignified air, 'that I consider the propagation of gospel truths, and the unmasking of imposture, particularly those of the church of Rome, as my business; and I will embrace every opportunity of doing both, in spite of the united opposition of men and devils.'

The colonel having looked very earnestly for some time at this violent reformer, at length said, 'I beg your excuse, sir, for having engrossed so much of your valuable time; it is a mistake I shall never again fall into.' So saying, he pulled off his hat, made a low bow, and walked away. The moment he entered his own house, he gave orders that his relation should be no more admittted.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Multa putans, sortemque animo miseratus iniquam.
VIRG. ÆN. l. vi.

THE attention which Colonel Seidlits displayed in preventing his lady from being disquieted in her religious opinions, and the delicacy of his behaviour on every oc-

ı, was felt by her with affectionate gratitude. She however, by no means so easy in the contemplation r husband's being a Protestant, as he was in that of emaining a Roman Catholic; and although the ar- ıntı of Father Mulo did not prevail on her to at- t his conversion, yet few things could have afforded reater satisfaction than to have seen her husband a- from conviction, what she considered as the only religion. But with what face could she speak to him subject which he never mentioned to her, and which ırmitted no person whatever to disturb her about? attempt on her part to alter his sentiments, implied she considered herself as wiser than he; whereas she considered herself as more fortunate, in having been ıted in a better religion.

ıese and similar considerations, which occupied the of this worthy lady, were sometimes on the point ıing sacrificed to the anguish she felt as often as the of her husband's continuing in heresy, and all the lful consequences occurred to her terrified imagina- ; for the natural clearness of her understanding, and erenity of her disposition, were clouded and disturb- y the terrific aspect and unrelenting severity of some e doctrines in which she had been instructed.

his anxiety of mind on her husband's account always ased in proportion to the hazards he was exposed to e exercise of his profession, and became particularly e in the course of a tedious illness, into which he fell ınsequence of a blow by the but-end of a musket; h he received on his breast at the battle of Hochkir- . This contusion produced a spitting of blood, and supposed to lay the foundation of that illness of which terwards died.

ın after the battle, the colonel was carried to a place ıfety. And Madame de Seidlits, having obtained a from Marshal Daun, hastened to the village in which ıusband was; where she attended him during his long ss with equal patience and tenderness. At one time

he was, by the mistake of the physician, thought in immediate danger. The anxiety which had so long lurked within the breast of Madame de Seidlits now became too violent for her to conceal; the very acute sorrow which she endured from the thought of losing a husband she highly esteemed and dearly loved, was absorbed in the keener anguish arising from the awful idea of the danger which threatened his immortal soul; and this impressed her with the more dread that it seemed to give him none.

Her terrors on this subject were augmented by a letter which she received from her indefatigable relation Father Mulo; who, having heard of the colonel's illness, most charitably entreated her to exert herself now or never; as there was no possibility of salvation for her husband, unless he relinquished heresy, embraced the Catholic faith, confessed his sins, and obtained absolution. One argument, he thought, proved the good policy of this measure beyond the power of reply; it was this.—'The Protestants themselves,' said this ingenious priest, 'admit, that well-meaning and virtuous persons may be saved, notwithstanding their dying in the Roman Catholic persuasion; whereas we assert, that no heretic, however virtuous in other respects he may be, can enter into the kingdom of heaven: it is apparent, therefore, that your husband runs no risk in following your advice, but the greatest by neglecting it.'

The agitation and confusion of Madame de Seidlits's mind prevented her from seeing this kind of reasoning in the same light in which her good sense would have presented it in a calmer moment.

One day, therefore, when her apprehensions on the colonel's account were at the height, after much circumlocution, with infinite delicacy, but in the most pathetic terms, she communicated her fears to him, and concluded by urging him to forsake his own religion, and embrace that of the church of Rome.

Having heard her with the utmost attention and some degree of surprise, the colonel said, 'I fear, my dear, you

o much alarmed on my account; but I assure you I passed an uncommonly good night, and I feel myself than I was yesterday.' 'I am most exceedingly o hear it,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'but let this reason for preventing a measure of infinite import- which cannot be taken too soon, but may be delayed is too late.'

Iy dearest Theresa,' said the colonel, taking hold of and, 'I view your present solicitude and importuni- the true light; I consider them as fresh proofs of noble friendship and affection which has been the ness of my life, and of which I ever had a grateful ction; but I must assure you, that although I have urged you, nor permitted any other person to urge on the same subject, which you now press on me, it because I have less concern for your soul than you for mine; nor is it from a want of partiality for the on which I myself profess. 'From what motive has your forbearance proceeded?' said Madame de ts. 'From a conviction,' replied he, 'that you are rtain of salvation in your religion as I can be in ' 'You must believe, then,' said Madame de Seid- ith quickness, 'that both religions are equally good.' my love, that does not follow; for although I think is much good in both, still I think my own is the rable; yet,' continued he gaily, 'as you possess so more of yours than I do of mine, I imagine the su- rity in quantity will make up for the deficiency in y, and render you as secure as you can wish.'

Iy dear colonel,' replied Madame de Seidlits, 'is subject, or is this a proper occasion for jesting?'

beg pardon, my dear,' said the colonel, 'I will be serious: in one great and essential point we have the ness to be of one opinion; both religions agree, that our duty to live a life of integrity, and do all the good n to our fellow-creatures.'

'or which reason,' interrupted Madame de Seidlits, n so anxious to do the greatest good possible to him

who is infinitely the dearest to me of all my fellow-creatures.'

'None of them can be more grateful,' replied the colonel, 'than I am for those good intentions; and you cannot doubt of my being willing to render you the same service; yet if you were to continue to press this upon me, and I the same upon you, the unavoidable effect of our eagerness to make each other eternally happy, would be the making each other eternally miserable; for what can be worse in this world or the next, than everlasting disputes between man and wife? Let us therefore avoid all disputable points,' continued he, 'and endeavour to promote our own happiness, and that of our neighbours, by every means in our power. The most probable reason I can conceive for the unequal distribution of the comforts of life, is to afford mankind opportunities for the exercises of benevolence, gratitude, and other virtues, which I am inclined to believe is the most likely way of acquiring the favour of the Deity. We certainly have it frequently in our power to add to the happiness or misery of our fellow creatures; to God Almighty we can neither do good nor harm; and therefore I cannot help thinking, that the conduct of our lives is of infinitely more importance than our religious opinions, or the forms of our worship.—It has been already settled between us,' continued he, 'that you shall educate our daughters in your way of thinking, as our sons shall be educated in mine; our mutual endeavour will be, to render them virtuous women and honest men, which implies benevolence and liberality of sentiment; if we succeed, I have no doubt, notwithstanding our having taken different roads, but we shall all meet in heaven.'

'God Almighty, in his infinite mercy, grant it may be so,' cried Madame de Seidlits, in a transport of affection: 'for I am certain heaven will be no heaven to me without those I so dearly love.' Then recollecting herself a little, she took occasion from what her husband had just said, to urge the last argument of her confessor.—'Since

you have no doubt,' said she, 'of our meeting in heaven, although I retain my religion, and since those of our church declare there is no admission for those who persist in heresy, why will you not, my dearest husband, take the safer course, and embrace the Catholic faith?'

Here the colonel, smiling through the tears which his lady's endearments had previously forced into his eyes, replied, 'I confess, my beloved Theresa, that this last argument is so unworthy of your excellent understanding, that I am convinced you have had it suggested by some one of far inferior sense and candour to yourself. Consider that, in my conscience,—for whether I am right or wrong is out of the question;—but in my conscience I think the Protestant religion preferable to that which you profess; yet you advise me, as the safest course I can take, to embrace yours; that is to say, to commit a piece of gross hypocrisy, and with a view to what? to impose on men? No; there might be sense in that; for men are imposed upon daily by hypocrites: but this piece of hypocrisy to which you advise me, is with a view to impose upon God, and to get smuggled into heaven as a Roman Catholic, while in my heart and conscience I remain a Protestant.'

Madame de Seidlits seemed embarrassed; after a short silence she said, 'I fear my anxiety makes me absurd; forgive me, my dear,' continued she, 'for teasing you in this foolish manner.'

'I shall think myself for ever obliged by the affectionate and generous anxiety of my Theresa,' said Seidlits.

'How could I allow myself to think for a moment that such integrity, such manly generosity of mind, as you have always displayed,' said she, taking her husband by the hand, 'and such strict adherence to the dictates of conscience, can be rejected? These also were the virtues of the man whose memory you so much revere, your noble friend and patron the marshal.'

'Ah! my Theresa,' cried Seidlits, 'can the long course of honour and integrity pursued by the gallant

Keith be forgotten and rejected by heaven, because he was born in a protestant country, or perhaps entertained erroneous speculative opinions? I well knew the uprightness of his mind, have seen many instances of his humanity and benevolence even to his enemies, and have myself received proofs of his generous friendship; it will be my latest boast to have been a witness to those noble exertions in which he finished a life of honour in the field of Hochkirchen, where the gallant prince Francis of Brunswic, a family so fertile in heroes, also fell. I thank heaven I had the honour of assisting the marshal's intrepid endeavours in rallying and inspiriting our disordered troops, in following him again and again to the charge; by which means the elated enemy was checked, our troops protected, the great monarch he served, and who honoured him with his friendship, enabled to retreat in such order as to pitch his camp within a few miles of the field from which he retired. This great officer himself refusing, although dangerously wounded, to quit the field, continued his exertions, till he received a second wound, which proved instantly mortal. And shall a parcel of ignorant monks, a gang of useless drones, deal damnation around on all who have not a ready faith in their legends and their—? But I ask your pardon, my dear,' said Seidlits, checking himself; 'I did not mean to say any thing disobliging; but I heartily wish you would observe the dictates of your own understanding more, and listen to the suggestions of others less; the virtuous conduct which you have hitherto pursued is your best security for happiness here and hereafter; permit me to endeavour to secure mine in the manner most agreeable to my conscience, and of course the most likely to be successful.'

'Forgive me, my dearest friend,' said Madame de Seidlits, 'for this once, and I shall assure you, all the monks on earth shall never prevail on me to give you a single hint of this nature again. I am not a little ashamed of what I was foolishly induced to say;—heaven be

praised that you seem so much better than you were last night.'

CHAPTER XL.

Shall man be left abandon'd in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doom'd to perish, hope to live?
Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain?
No; heaven's immortal spring shall yet revive;
And man's majestic beauty bloom again.

BEATTIE.

THIS was the first and last dispute on religion that ever passed between Colonel Seidlits and his lady, although both continued attached to *that* in which they had been bred; yet, from this time, Madame de Seidlits seemed to adopt, in many particulars, the liberal sentiments of her husband. They lived together in the happiest union for several years after the general peace.

Laura, their only child, was educated, according to the agreement between them, in her mother's religion.

It was already remarked, that the colonel never fully recovered his health after the contusion in his breast; on the slightest cold, and sometimes without any known cause, he was liable to be seized with fits of oppressive and difficult breathing; a severe attack of this nature obliged him, by the king's express order, to quit the field in the middle of that short war between Prussia and the emperor respecting the succession of Bavaria. Having returned by slow journeys to Berlin, he soon after had the happiness to hear of his son's distinguishing himself by relieving the baron Carlostein from the Austrian hussars. And at the conclusion of the peace he retired to his small villa, with his wife and daughter, where he had the pleasure of entertaining the two friends, as has been mentioned. Carlostein he never saw more; but Captain Seidlits spent all the time he could be spared from his re-

giment in his father's family, with whom he lived in the greatest harmony.

But Colonel Seidlits's health gradually declined; this however was more apparent to others, than to those constantly with him; and Madame de Seidlits was for a long time deceived by the cheerful air her husband always assumed in her presence; for his mind remained in full vigour notwithstanding his bodily weakness. Having perceived, however, for some days, that he showed uncommon solicitude in arranging and settling his affairs, she took notice of that circumstance to him with an air of apprehension.

'Is it not a sufficient reason,' said he, 'my dear friend, that I know I must die sometime or other, and that I do not know how soon?'

'But why disturb your mind with business at present?' said she, 'you are certainly in no immediate danger.'

'You are not then of the opinion of the duc de la Rochefoucault,' replied the colonel, 'who says, *Il n'y a que la mort qui soit certaine, et cependant nous agissons comme si c'etoit la seule chose incertaine.*'

'That is applicable to me as well as to you, my dear,' said Madame de Seidlits.

'It is so,' replied the colonel; 'and if I had become apprehensive of your dying as often as you prepared yourself for death, I should have been in continual apprehension ever since I knew you.' The colonel said this with such an easy air, that Madame de Seidlits became less alarmed.

But although the colonel had none of the oppressive asthmatic attacks as formerly, he felt his strength melting fast away; he permitted none of his family, however, to attend him through the night; an old soldier alone, who had been long in his service, lay in his bed-chamber.

A few days after this conversation with his lady, having had a very disturbed night, he perceived the near ap-

proach of death. He caused himself to be raised in his bed in the morning, a little before the hour at which his family usually entered the room; they were unconscious of his illness through the night; his lady, with Laura and Captain Seidlits, sat around his bed;—when the colonel, smiling, said in a faint voice to his son, 'It is a long while, Seidlits, since I assured my wife, that notwithstanding the difference of our sentiments on certain subjects, this company should all meet in heaven.'

'I hope you will keep your word, sir,' said the young man; 'but not for a long time.'

'It is my hope,' replied the colonel, 'that it will be long before the rest of the company follow; but I feel that I must set out soon.'

'Ah, father!' cried Laura, with a voice of sorrow. Captain Seidlits looked with anguish at his mother-in-law.

'Why do you talk so, my dear,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'you seem a little faint this morning; but you have often recovered from more oppressive symptoms.'

'Never, never! my beloved friend,' said he; 'but you would not wish me to struggle any longer; the hope of perfect recovery has been long over, and the struggle is ending.'

'Alas! cried she, starting from her seat greatly alarmed, 'send for a physician.'

'If you love me,' said he, 'let there be no intrusion.'

She sunk on the bed, grasping his hand. 'Let my latest breath,' continued he, 'declare my unaltered affection. I regret that I have been able to make so small a provision; but what can a soldier provide? I have served an heroic monarch with fidelity; he knows it. Your conduct, my Seidlits,' looking at his son, 'has thrown comfort and gladness on the heart of your father, and made my declining years the happiest of my life. I know you will behave with duty to your mother and affection to your sister. Farewel, my beloved Theresa;—farewel, my sweet Laura;—farewel, my Seidlits;

I resign you to *his* protection, into whose merciful hands I resign my own soul.—God Almighty bless you;—once more farewel;—but I hope—I trust not for ever.—My eyes grow dim!—a dark mist overhangs them!—I see you not, my Theresa!—My children!—my organs fail! yet my soul departs entire.——Father of mercy, receive my soul!'—His voice failed, and after a few sobs this gallant soldier expired.

Madame de Seidlits remained in speechless affliction, holding the cold hand of her husband for a considerable time after he had breathed his last. Laura, kneeling by her mother, wept without uttering a syllable; and Captain Seidlits, unable to comfort either, stood motionless with grief, till a servant entering the chamber, Seidlits supported Laura and her mother to their apartment, and then retired to his own.

CHAPTER XLI.

La gravité est un mystere du corps, inventé pour cacher les défauts de l'esprit. ROCHEFOUCAULT.

COLONEL SEIDLITS left his family in very moderate circumstances. The king appointed a pension to his widow, and soon after promoted his son, who had only the rank of lieutenant, to the command of a troop of dragoons. This young man behaved with great generosity to his mother-in-law; and continued for some time after his father's death to live with her and his sister; but, on his being obliged to attend his regiment, Madame de Seidlits took the resolution of returning to her native country, which she put in execution notwithstanding the strongest solicitations on the part of Captain Seidlits, whose friendship and affection for them both made him exceedingly desirous of their remaining in Germany.

When we were led into this long digression, we left Madame de Seidlits in conversation with Father Pedro,

which was interrupted by the coming of Laura and Father Mulo. The latter always harboured fears that Madame de Seidlits's long residence in a country of heretics had diminished in her mind that salutary horror in which he thought they should be held by every sincere Catholic. To counteract this, and to revive her faith in those points which he considered as most essential, he sent her, since her arrival at Naples, a large folio of divinity, earnestly entreating her to peruse it attentively along with her daughter, telling her at the same time, that she might rely on having the second volume as soon as they had read the first.

'Have you perused that admirable work, my dear daughter?' said Father Mulo, seeing the book lie on the table.

'I have begun it,' replied Madame de Seidlits; 'it is a book of too serious a nature to be read over superficially.'

'It is indeed a work of great weight, and requires the utmost attention,' said Father Mulo.

'It were fortunate,' said Laura, 'if the authors of books which require so much attention could write them so as to command it.'

'The business of an author is to write books,' said Father Mulo, with becoming gravity; 'it is the duty of the reader to command his attention when he peruses them.'

'You are indeed too hard upon authors, my good young lady,' said Father Pedro, 'to expect that they should not only write their books, but also be obliged to command the attention of their readers. My learned brother has, with more regard to distributive justice, divided the toil between the author and the reader.'

'In my humble opinion,' replied Laura, smiling, 'he allots too large a proportion of the task to the courteous reader. It is not so easy a matter to command one's attention on perusing certain books as you seem to think. F

own I never found mine more disobedient than in the perusal of that very admirable work which the reverend father recommends.'

'Your taste, I am afraid,' said Father Mulo, addressing himself to Laura with much solemnity, 'is in some measure corrupted by books of prophane history, or of amusement, whose merit consists in their eloquence, or perhaps in their wit.'

'And you may judge, my dear daughter,' added Father Pedro, 'how little value ought to be put on that kind of merit, by its being often to be met with in the writings of infidels and heretics.'

'I should be better pleased,' resumed Laura, 'to meet it elsewhere; but I hope, father, you do not think that where there is wit there must also be infidelity.'

'Why really, daughter,' said Father Mulo, answering with more gravity of manner than depth of reflection, 'where there is much of the first, there is often reason to suspect some of the last.'

'I cannot be of that opinion,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'for I have generally found true wit in better company; and although we sometimes find infidelity accompanied by wit, how much oftener are we shocked with pert ostentatious infidelity without any wit at all?'

'I am convinced my mother is in the right,' cried Laura; 'and I hope you will allow, father, that there is not a necessary connection between them.'

Father Mulo, perceiving at length that he had spoken a little inconsiderately, was obliged to own, though with evident reluctance, that he hoped there was not.

'I am *certain* there is not,' added Laura; 'and I am obliged to my mother for having made me remark instances, both in conversation and in reading, where not only the strength of the arguments, but also the purest wit, was on the side of virtue and piety.'

'I can assure you, young lady, from my own experience,' said Father Mulo, with an air of great sagacity,

and wishing to retract his first assertion, 'that it is almost always the case;—true wit and eloquence are generally on the side of orthodoxy.'

'How comes it then that this author,' said Laura, pointing to the large volume, 'has not seasoned his work with a little wit or eloquence, since there is nothing sinful in them; and they would have made it more universally read, and of course more useful?'

'How comes it?' repeated Father Mulo, who was not famous for quick replies on emergencies of this kind,—'how comes it, did you say?'

'Why it comes by the diabolical malice of Satan,' cried Father Pedro, stepping in to the relief of his brother; 'it is all owing to the spite of our great spiritual enemy, who is ever ready to enliven the works of the wicked; and has, it would seem, perplexed the sense and darkened the reasoning of this excellent author, so as to render it a little laborious for the young lady to read his work with the attention it requires.'

'The greater the effort the more meritorious will it be in the young lady to perform that duty as she ought,' resumed Father Mulo.

'True, brother,' said Pedro; 'and thus the malice of Satan is defeated, and like the words of Balaam the son of Beor, what was intended as a curse is converted into a blessing.'

Father Pedro had a sovereign contempt for his venerable brother; and as he wished to retain his influence with Madame de Seidlits without participation, he was too ready to display him in a ridiculous light before her, as in the present instance.

But perceiving that he should have no farther opportunity that day of prosecuting the object of his visit, he withdrew, leaving Father Mulo to dine with his two relations, which he did accordingly, and in such a manner as gave them no suspicion of his having already made a very ample repast at the house of a pious old lady, whose time of dining was two hours earlier than that of Madame de

Seidlits; for it must be allowed in justice to Father Mulo, that although he reasoned but feebly, and thought with difficulty, he digested with uncommon force and freedom.

CHAPTER XLII.

——— With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought
Nigh river's mouth of Foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sails;
So varied he. ——

MILTON.

FATHER PEDRO having found Madame de Seidlits less tractable than he expected, resolved, on the next occasion, to sound Laura herself, and try to dispose her to the purpose he had in view. Accordingly, a few days after, on being left alone with her, he turned the conversation on the subject of charity; mentioned some individuals who distinguished themselves by the exercise of this virtue, and dwelt particularly on Zeluco, whom he represented as one of the most charitable persons he had ever known; adding, that those were happy who were blessed with benevolent and charitable inclinations, but much more were they to be envied, who were also blessed with the means of putting such inclinations into action.

Laura agreeing with him in this sentiment, he said, 'Would you not be happy, my daughter, to be in this enviable situation?'

'I flatter myself,' replied she, 'that if I ever had a great desire to be rich, it proceeded from a disposition to relieve the distressed. But it has been remarked, father,' added she, 'that those who have nothing to give are wonderfully generous; and I myself have known some who, when they had not the power, expressed the strongest inclination of being liberal; yet when they afterwards came to have the power, seemed entirely to lose the inclination.

Those observations give me diffidence in myself; I am not certain what alteration riches might make in my own disposition.'

'I have no diffidence in you,' said the father.

'Of this, at least, I am certain,' said Laura, 'that if I could know beforehand, that wealth would have the same effect on me that it seems to have had on some of my acquaintance, I should refuse it were it offered to me.'

'Depend upon it, my dear daughter,' said Father Pedro, 'those you allude to never had charitable and benevolent dispositions; they have only affected to have them, when they well knew that nothing was expected, nor would be received from them. Their real dispositions appeared afterwards when they became rich. But, in you, my dear child, exists the reality, not the semblance, of benevolence; and riches could only enable you to extend your generosity, not render it more sincere.'

Laura thanked him for his good opinion.

'I should have still a better opinion of you,' said Father Pedro, 'if I had not been informed that you refused this very enviable power.'

'I have no idea of what you mean,' said Laura.

'Tell me, in the first place, my dear daughter, whether you really refused your hand to Signor Zeluco?'

'I did,' said she, without hesitation.

'And what good reason could you have, my dear child, for rejecting so generous a man?'

'You will allow, father, that a woman may have good reasons for refusing a man for her husband, although she does not think proper to reveal them to her father confessor.'

'You ought to have very good reasons indeed, daughter, for declining such a fortunate and happy match.'

'But my particular sentiments and feelings might render it a very unhappy match.'

'How could it be unhappy for you,' said the father, 'who would reap every advantage by the alliance?'

'If my husband could reap none,' said she, 'that circumstance alone would make it an uncomfortable alliance to me.'

'Do not mistake me, my dear child; your husband would certainly acquire a beautiful, accomplished, and I hope a pious wife; but the gifts of fortune are all on his side. There are many beautiful and accomplished young ladies in Italy who would be happy to be united to Signor Zeluco: but what probability is there of your having the offer of a husband of superior fortune to his?'

'Not the least,' said Laura; 'but, my good father, I thought the question between us related to happiness, not merely to fortune.'

'It does so,' answered Father Pedro; 'and what do you think of the happiness of having it in your power, as well as in your inclination, to do good to others: to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, protect the orphan, and make the widow's heart sing for joy?'

'According to your own account, father,' said Laura, 'all this is done by Signor Zeluco's fortune already; to embarrass such a generous and charitable man with the additional expenses which a wife occasions,' she added with a smile, 'would be diverting into different channels that bounty which, at present, flows entirely upon the naked, the orphan, and widow.'

'There is no occasion for turning it into another channel,' said the father, a little peevishly; 'but I perceive you are in a jesting mood.'

'You shall not be angry, father,' said Laura; 'if you are offended, I must be to blame.'

'Nay,' replied he, 'I am not offended, child; 'your vivacity cannot offend me; I wish, however, it may not lead you into error.'

'If it ever should, father,' said Laura, 'I beg you will not, by way of expiation, enjoin me to give my hand to Zeluco, for that is a penance I shall never submit to.'

Laura pronounced these last words with such strength of emphasis, as, joined to what her mother had said,

greatly damped the sanguine hopes of Pedro with regard to the success of his mission.

CHAPTER XLIII.

S'il y a un amour pur et exempt du mêlange de nos autres passions, c'est celui qui est caché au fond du cœur et que nous ignorons nous-memes.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

In the meantime, Signora Sporza became so very fond of her two relations, that she preferred their company to those numerous assemblies in which she had been accustomed to pass her evenings. Having perceived that Laura had no great relish for them, she formed a small select party at her own house, which met two or three times a-week, and to which the honourable Mr. N—, and a few others, were constantly invited.

This gentleman had long been on a footing of friendly intimacy with Signora Sporza, and now found an additional power of attraction to her parties in the lively and judicious conversation of Laura. Few men's company was more universally acceptable than Mr. N—'s; but what rendered him peculiarly agreeable to Madame de Seidlits and her daughter, was his acquaintance with the Baron Carlostein and Captain Seidlits. He became known to the first during his residence at Potsdam; and the baron, on his expressing an inclination to see the camp at Magdeburg, gave him a letter of introduction to his friend Captain Seidlits, who was there with his regiment; and Mr. N— always spoke of those two gentlemen in high terms of commendation.

Laura was seldom or never in company with Mr. N—, without making fresh inquiry concerning her brother. It was not in Mr. N—'s power to talk much of him without his friend Carlostein's being included in the circumstances of the narrative; and every anecdote relating to those gentlemen seemed highly interesting to Madame de Seidlits, and still more so to Laura.

'Pray, sir,' said she to Mr. N—, one evening when the rest of the company were engaged at cards, 'is my brother as fond of horses as ever?'

'He is remarkably fond of his horses,' replied Mr. N—; 'and no officer in the army is esteemed a better rider.'

'He is very graceful on horseback,' said Laura.

'He is very much so,' replied Mr. N—.

'I do not think the scar on his face at all disfigures him,' said Laura.

'He had no scar on his face, madam, when I saw him,' replied Mr. N—.

'No scar,' said Laura, with surprise.

'No, madam;—not Captain Seidlits: his friend the baron, indeed, has a very honourable scar covered with a piece of black plaster, which does not disfigure him in the least.'

'I thought you had mentioned him,' said Laura, blushing very deeply.

A considerable degree of intimacy was gradually formed between Mr. N— and this young lady. It was hardly possible for them not to have a mutual esteem for each other. Laura had received the most favourable impression of Mr. N— from Signora Sporza, who had spoke of him as a man of sense, integrity, and benevolence; and her own observation of his conversation and behaviour, confirmed her in the justice of her friend's representation. He, on the other hand, while he agreed with the general opinion of the graces of Laura's face and person, was still more struck with her other accomplishments, with the genuine modesty and unaffected dignity of manner which accompanied her beauty: she was equally free from coquetry and disguise; her sentiments of those around her might be easily guessed by her behaviour.

To those of whom she had but an indifferent opinion, she observed such a degree of cautious and polite reserve as rendered it very difficult for them to be on a footing of any degree of freedom or ease with her, however strongly

they were desirous of being so. But to those of whom she thought well, and particularly to Mr. N—, she behaved with a natural frankness, expressive of confidence and good-will.

Yet although this engaging frankness of manner was extended to her male friends as well as her female, it was always attended with such expressive purity and dignity as precluded licentious hopes or wishes; for innate modesty pervaded the easy openness of her manners, appeared in all her words, actions, and gestures, and presided even in her dress. As often as the mode seemed to lean to the opposite side, Laura had the art of making her's retain the fashionable air, while she corrected the circumstance which she disapproved.

Mr. N— had the same degree of esteem and approbation of Laura, which she made no difficulty of declaring for him; and there was no engagement which he would have preferred to passing an evening at Signora Sporza's, when he knew that Laura was to be of the party.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Characteristic Sketches.

Mr. N— had for his servant out of livery, one Buchanan, a Scotchman, to whom his master's growing attachment to Laura gave the greatest concern; and his concern augmented in proportion to the beauties and accomplishments which he himself could not help observing in that young lady, and the good qualities he heard ascribed to her; for he had too good an opinion of his master's taste and penetration to think him capable of a lasting attachment to one who was not remarkably accomplished. But Laura had one failing which, in this man's opinion, neither beauty, nor fortune, nor understanding, nor an assemblage of every good quality of mind or person could compensate—she was a Roman Catholic.

That his master should be captivated, and possibly

drawn into a marriage with a woman of that religion, Buchanan considered as one of the greatest misfortunes that could happen to him, and he knew it would be viewed in the same light by Lady Elizabeth, Mr. N—'s aunt, by whom he had been placed with her nephew. The strong attachment this man had to his master, and his extraordinary zeal for his welfare, prompted him to intermeddle in matters which did not properly belong to him, and to offer his advice much oftener than it was wished or expected.

One day when Mr. N— dined at home, and expected nobody but Mr. Steele, who lived with him, the latter invited Mr. Squander, and he brought along with him a certain Mr. Bronze, one of those gossipping companions, who know every body, are of every body's opinion, and are always ready to laugh at every body's joke; who nestle themselves into the intimacy of men of fortune and rank, allow themselves to be laughed at, are invited on that account, or to fill a vacant chair at the table; and sometimes merely to afford the landlord the comfort of having at least one person in the company of inferior understanding to himself, whose chief employment is to fetch and carry tittle-tattle, become at length as it were one of the family, and are alternately caressed and abused like any other spaniel in it. This person had, many years ago, come to Italy with a party of young English, who, as they posted through the country, dropped him sick at Ferrara; and having resided ever since in Italy, he was thought to have some taste in pictures, antique intaglios, cameos, statues, &c. and had picked up a considerable fortune by selling them to his countrymen who came to Rome or Naples.

Mr. Squander would not, for his own private satisfaction, have given a horse-shoe for all the antiques in Rome, and had no more taste in painting than his pointer; yet, thinking that he must carry home a small assortment of each, were it only to prove that he had been in Italy, Mr. Bronze had been recommended to him as a great connois-

sur, who would either furnish him with what he wanted, or assist him in purchasing it.

Buchanan waited at the sideboard.—They talked of an assembly, at which Messrs. N—, Squander, and Steele, had been the preceding evening. The former spoke with warmth of the beauty of Laura. The antiquarian, who had also seen her, said, her face had a great resemblance to a certain admired Madona of Guido's.—Mr. Squander observed, that he thought she was very like a picture which he had seen at Bologna, but whether it was painted by Guido or by Rheni he could not recollect.—Mr. N— said, smiling, that it was probably done by both, as they often painted conjunctly;—'but, however that may be,' continued he, 'the young lady I mentioned has one of the finest countenances that I ever saw either in nature or on canvass.' Buchanan, who was sorry to hear his master praise her with such warmth, shook his head.

'You have seen many handsomer in Scotland,' said Squander, addressing himself to Buchanan.

'I will not presume to make any comparisons, Mr. Squander,' replied Buchanan; 'for, on the present occasion, I doubt they would be thought odious.'

Mr. N— had often desired Squander to leave off the indecent custom which he had, of addressing the servants, but without effect. So taking no notice of what passed between him and Buchanan, he proceeded to praise Laura's accomplishments, particularly her voice, and her execution on the piano-forte.

'*Your* countrywomen,' said Squander, renewing his attack on Buchanan, 'prefer the Scotch fiddle.'—The antiquarian laughed very heartily, and all the footmen tittered at this jest, which Squander himself called a bon mot.—'A bon mot!' repeated Steele.—'Yes, by G—d,' said Squander, 'and as good a one as ever George Bon Mot uttered in his life. What think you, Buchanan?'

'It certainly bears this mark of a good joke, Mr. Squander,' said Buchanan, 'that it has been often re-

peated; yet there are people who would rather be the object than the rehearser of it.'

'You are a wit Mr. Buchanan,' said Bronze, tipping the wink to Squander, 'and you will certainly make your fortune by it.'

'If I should fail that way, Mr. Bronze, I may try what is to be done by the haberdashing of intaglios and cameos, and other hardware,' said Buchanan.

'A great many more of *your* countrymen, indeed, have made their fortune as pedlars than as wits,' resumed Squander.

The antiquarian burst into a loud fit of laughter at this sally, clapping his hands, and crying, excellent, bravo!

Buchanan, observing that Mr. N— was displeased at what was going on, made no reply, till Squander pushed him by, saying, 'What have you to say to that, Buchanan?'

'All I have to say, Mr. Squander, is, that I have known some of my countrymen, as well as yours, who were beholden to their fortune for all the applause their wit received.'

Although Mr. N— could with difficulty refrain from smiling at this remark, assuming a serious air, he told Buchanan, there was no need of his farther attendance; and when he withdrew, Mr. N— started another subject, which prevented the antiquarian and Mr. Squander from abusing Buchanan, for which he saw them prepared.

Mr. N—, however, spoke not in his usual affable manner to Buchanan the whole evening, and when he went out, addressing one of the footmen instead of Buchanan, as was his custom, he said, he was going to Madame de Seidlits.

Buchanan imagining that his master was highly displeased with him, imputed it to his having shaken his head at the praises of Laura; and was now more convinced than ever, that Mr. N— was desperately in love

with her, and in immediate danger of proposing marriage to her.

Under this apprehension he resolved to use every means, even at the risk of greatly offending his master, to prevent a measure which he thought diametrically opposite to his interest and happiness. Knowing that a certain baronet, who was uncle to Mr. N— by the mother, and whose presumptive heir Mr. N— was, had lately arrived at Rome, and was soon expected at Naples; Buchanan imagined the most likely means he could use to accomplish his purpose, was to inform the baronet; he therefore determined to write to him all his fears relative to his master. Buchanan had been educated at an university, and had learning sufficient to render him a pedant; to have an opportunity of displaying his learning, therefore, in all probability, was an additional motive for his writing the following letter to the baronet.—

'HONOURED SIR,

'Hearing of your arrival at Rome, I think it my indispensable duty to inform you, that my master, and your nephew, the honourable Mr. N—, has been seized with a violent passion for a young lady denominated Laura Seidlits, who lately arrived at this city from Germany. The young woman is of a comely countenance.—*Vultus nimium lubricus aspici*, and, as far as I have hitherto been able to learn, of a very tolerable reputation. Yet, notwithstanding the fairness of her character and countenance, she is at bottom a black Papist.—*Hinc illæ lachrymæ!*—This is the cause of my affliction; for were she as beautiful as Helen of Greece, Cleopatra of Egypt, or even as Mary queen of Scots, she being, like the foresaid Mary, of the Popish persuasion, would be a most unsuitable spouse for my master. Yet there is hardly a day goes over his head that he is not in this young woman's company, and the Lord above only knows how far a headstrong youth, instigated by passion, may push matters, more especially as he generally meets her at one Signora Sporza's, a very

pawky* gentlewoman, who understands what's what as well as any woman in Naples, and being the relation of the foresaid Laura, will leave no stone unturned to get her linked to Mr. N—.

'I once had hopes, that as the young woman attends mass regularly every day,—for those poor deluded creatures shew more zeal for their own superstition than some Protestants do for true religion,—I had once hopes, I say, that she might object to marry a Protestant. But I am informed, that, as the song is, *Her mother did so before her*, which has greatly diminished my hopes of refusal on her part; for it is natural to conclude, that the mother has given the daughter a tincture of her own disposition, and you know, sir, that

> Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
> Testa diu.

'I am sure I need add no more to convince you of the misery that such a match as this would occasion to all Mr. N—'s relations, particularly to his honoured aunt, who holds Antichrist and all his adherents in the greatest detestation. You must likewise be sensible, that a Popish wife, however fair her aspect, must give but a dark prospect to a Protestant husband, inasmuch as her religion instructs her that she is not obliged to keep faith with heretics.—*Heu, quoties fidem mutatosque Deos flebit!*

'These reflections are so manifest, that you will wonder they do not occur to Mr. N—; but you must remember, that he is blinded by the mist of passion, and in that state people cannot perceive the force of reason;—*Quid enim ratione timemus aut cupimus?*—Yet if you could find a plausible pretext for desiring Mr. N— to meet you at Rome, instead of allowing him to wait for you here at Naples, I am convinced he would obey your summons; and when he is removed from the opportunities of seeing this young woman, he may possibly be beyond the influence of her attraction, and above the wiles of her co-adjutors; and you may then prevail on him to listen to the

* Sly.

voice of reason, abandon this land of superstition and delusion, where we have sojourned too long, and return directly to Britain; whereas it would be as easy to whistle the *lavrocks out of the lift*,* as to make him agree to this proposition while he remains within eye-shot of this same Laura Seidlits. I am, with all due respect, honoured sir, your most obedient servant,

'GEORGE BUCHANAN.'

The gentleman to whom this letter was addressed had already received a hint from a friend of his at Naples to the same purpose; he therefore determined to follow Buchanan's advice, and actually wrote to his nephew, that it was not in his power to proceed to Naples as he had intended, and expressing a strong desire of seeing him and Mr. Steele at Rome.

However fond Mr. N— was of Laura's company, he could not think of allowing his uncle, for whom, independent of other considerations, he had a very great respect, to return to England without waiting on him; he therefore took his leave of Signora Sporza and her two friends a few days after receiving this letter, and he and Mr. Steele set out for Rome, accompanied by Buchanan and two footmen.

Signora Sporza told him at parting, that she was herself engaged to a lady of her acquaintance, who had business of importance at Rome, to make that jaunt with her, so that she expected very soon to have the pleasure of meeting him in that city.

Squander, and two or three other young Englishmen, finding their time pass a little heavily without Mr N— and Steele, followed them on the third day after they set out.

* The larks from the sky.

CHAPTER XLV.

L'hypocrisie est un hommage que le vice rend à la vertu.
ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO plainly perceived at their next meeting the ill success of the father's negotiation, in spite of the palliations with which it was communicated. As his hopes had been greatly raised, his disappointment was great in proportion; his enraged spirit, unaccustomed to restraint, on this occasion was deaf to the dictates of caution, and rejected the mask of hypocrisy; he raved like a madman, poured curses on both mother and daughter, particularly the latter, on whom he vowed vengeance for what he termed her insolence, and for all the trouble and vexation she had given him.

Father Pedro crossed himself, and began to repeat his pater noster.

'Come, come, father,' said Zeluco, 'do not let you and I keep up the farce with each other any longer. I know you have too much sense to lay any stress on these mummeries; and I am not such a fool as to think that a woman is to be won by crossings or prayers.'

'You have as good a chance that way, however,' replied the father, 'as by swearing and raging like a fury.'

'I will have her one way or another!' exclaimed Zeluco.

'And what way do you intend to take next?' said Pedro.

'I'll have her by force.—I'll have her seized, and carried aboard a vessel.—I'll fly with her to Algiers! to the West Indies!—any where!' exclaimed he, with a loud voice, and stamping with his foot; 'for she shall be mine;—by all the gods, she shall!'

'Of all the gods,' said Father Pedro, calmly, 'the god of hell was the only one who was driven to the miser-

able shift of committing a rape to get himself a wife; do you intend to imitate *him*, signor?'

'I do not care who I imitate,' roared Zeluco, 'were it the devil.'

'In the present case, however, you will not even have the satisfaction of imitating him throughout; for although you may hurry *yourself* to hell, you have little chance of carrying the lady along with you. I would advise you, therefore, to adopt some less desperate expedient.'

'What expedient?' cried Zeluco. 'I can think of none; I can hardly think at all.—But if thou canst assist me in obtaining this woman, thou wilt eternally oblige me, priest; and thou shalt have money enough to build a church.'

Although Zeluco in his rage thus threw himself open, and put himself in some degree in the father's power, the latter was resolved not to follow his example, and put himself in Zeluco's. He plainly perceived, indeed, that Zeluco did not imagine that he had acted from motives of piety; but whatever suspicions he might entertain, Pedro considered that there was some difference between being suspected of a villany, and actually avowing it; he therefore assured Zeluco, that he would have no farther connection with him in this business, and that he would inform against him if he made any criminal attempt on Laura. He acknowledged, he said, that as he had thought his marriage with that young lady would be happy for both, and agreeable to the worthy lady her mother, besides conducing to other good purposes, he should have been extremely happy to have promoted it; but after the furious and unwarrantable projects he had just heard of, he desired to have no more to do with it, directly or indirectly.

This calm remonstrance brought Zeluco to his senses; he now perceived that the person he had to deal with, and whose assistance he still thought might be of use, was of

too wary a character to act without a cover, to which he might retreat on occasion.

After a little recollection he replied, in conciliating terms,—'Surely, father, you cannot imagine that what has escaped me in a moment of passion is my serious intention; my own reflections would very soon have convinced me of the folly and wickedness of an attempt which your prudence has in an instant put in a just light. I think myself most happy in such a friend on whose wisdom I may rely, and whose counsels I shall ever be ready to follow. My love and respect for the virtuous young lady is such, that I will use every lawful means in my power to obtain her hand. I know the well-placed confidence which she has in you, and I most earnestly beg that you will use your influence with her in my favour. In the meantime, my dear father, I am sensible of the trouble which I give you; and as the only way in which you permit me to shew my gratitude, is by enabling you to extend your benevolence to the deserving and the necessitous, I beg, therefore, you will accept of this, which you will apply to whatever pious purpose you think proper.'—So saying, he put a purse of sequins into the father's hands, assuring him of double the sum, independent of what he had already promised, on the successful conclusion of the business.

'Now, my son,' replied the monk, 'you talk rationally; and reason always suggests a mode of action opposite to what is prompted by rage. You have already gained the good opinion of the young lady's mother; please to recollect how you gained it; not by violence, but by gentleness, by rendering her an essential service: and although the young woman herself seems indisposed towards you, yet who knows what a sense of gratitude might do?—it might have the same effect on the daughter that it has had on the mother. The last obligation you laid on the family was of a pecuniary nature, which is more apt to make an impression on an old heart than

on a young; but there are obligations which make deeper impressions on young hearts than on old.'

'What obligations are those? I am ready to do whatever you direct.'

'Opportunities of this kind may occur,' said the father, 'and then your own good sense will direct you how to profit by them. In your rage you proposed methods the most likely to make her detest you, and love those who should have the good fortune to free her from you; you spoke not like yourself, but like a *robber*, like a *ravisher*. A man who attempted what you threatened would draw upon himself her just hatred; whereas he who did the reverse, who had the good fortune to save her from such an attempt, might probably gain her love.'

Having said this in a very significant manner, Father Pedro took his leave. In spite of Zeluco's endeavours to prevail on him to be more explicit, after remaining for some time in profound meditation, 'He who has the good fortune,' said he, repeating to himself the words which Pedro had pronounced with emphasis; 'he who has the good fortune to save her from such an attempt might probably gain her heart.—Who can make such an attempt?—How can I deliver her from dangers to which she is not exposed?'

He conjectured, however, that the father meant to convey a hint to him respecting some emergency which he knew would occur, although he was resolved not to be farther explicit; and determined to observe his words and actions attentively, in the hopes of discovering his meaning more clearly.

Two days after, he was able more fully to comprehend the father's idea; when he informed Zeluco that he had just left Madame de Seidlits and her daughter; that Laura having often expressed a curiosity to visit Mount Vesuvius, her mother, who had formerly opposed it, had now agreed to it, on his offering to accompany her and Signora Sporza; that accordingly he and these two ladies were to dine next day at Portici, visit the mountain in the

evening, and return to Naples the same night.—'If you are eager to be of the party,' added he, 'I will endeavour to obtain the ladies consent.'

Zeluco, engrossed by reflection, did not give an immediate answer.

'But I know,' continued the father, 'you have been there already; and possibly do not choose to return again.'

'Pray, my good father,' said Zeluco, rousing from his reverie, 'at what hour do you propose returning to town?'

'It is impossible to say exactly,' replied Father Pedro; 'I dare say it will be late enough, for I find Signora Laura wishes to see the explosions to the greatest advantage; but I perceive we cannot have you. I shall not, however, inform the ladies that I made you the proposal, or that you so much as know of the expedition, lest they should accuse you of want of gallantry. Adieu. I can stay no longer at present.'

'What servants do you take with you?' resumed Zeluco.

'I really do not know,' said the father; 'but I must be excused, I cannot stay any longer now;—one of my penitents waits for me.—Servants!—let me see—there will be no need of many servants. I presume we shall have only Jachimo. The muleteers will be with us till we regain the carriage; and then we shall have only the coachman and Jachimo to attend us to town.' Saying this, the cautious monk hurried away, leaving Zeluco satisfied respecting the meaning of his former hints.

CHAPTER XLVI.

——Revenge, at first thought sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils.
MILTON.

ZELUCO now determined to plan an attack on the ladies as they returned from the mountain, to drive off the assailants, and assume the merit with Laura of having saved her from robbery and assassination.

Having communicated his design to his valet-de-chambre, the confidant and accomplice of many of his villanies; the scheme seemed practicable and safe in all respects, except in the necessity which appeared of employing many agents. The valet however undertook the business with the assistance of only one person, and spoke with a confidence of success seldom acquired otherwise than by experience in similar scenes.

Being now convinced of Signora Sporza's dislike to him, and having a violent suspicion that it was through her means that Laura was so ill disposed towards him, Zeluco expressed some anxiety with regard to Signora Sporza, lest she might suspect the source of the attempt.—The valet assured him that *she* should be particularly attended to, for he would order his companion to fire his pistol so close to her ear, that though charged only with powder, it would confound her sufficiently to prevent her from making observations, and terrify the rest of the company into non-resistance.

This suggested a horrid piece of wickedness to the vengeful mind of Zeluco, which however he did not communicate to the valet; but next day, when he understood that every thing was arranged, he desired to see the pistol with which the man was to arm his companion:—'You are certain it is charged with powder only,' said he 'I am very certain,' replied the valet; 'for I charged it myself.' 'Let the fellow fire then directly at her head: this will frighten her into silence,' said Zeluco, 'and ren

der every thing easy.'—He then gave him very particular directions in what manner they were to behave to Laura; and, sending the valet to fetch something from a distant part of the house, he slipt two bullets into the pistol: the hatred and thirst of revenge, which burned in his breast against Signora Sporza, overcoming his caution, and prompting him to a measure which might have produced a discovery of the whole plan.

Before these two emissaries set out, Zeluco again repeated to the valet not to allow his companion to touch Laura, put to pull Signora Sporza entirely out of the carriage, and then fire the pistol in her face, which would be the signal for Zeluco himself to make his appearance.

In the evening Zeluco waited on Madame de Seidlits, where he found Father Mulo; he affected great surprise when she told him that her daughter, Signora Sporza, and Father Pedro had set out that same morning on an expedition to Mount Vesuvius; and that they were not as yet returned.

When the night advanced without their appearing, Madame de Seidlits became uneasy; the noise of every carriage gave her hopes that it was theirs; and every disappointment when the carriage passed increased her uneasiness.

When Madame de Seidlits first began to express her apprehension, Zeluco withdrew on pretence of an engagement; and Father Mulo remained, as he said himself, to comfort Madame de Seidlits, in case any misfortune should really have happened to Laura and the rest of the party.

Madame de Seidlits had heard, in general, of people being sometimes hurt by the fall of the substances exploded from the mountain: her alarmed imagination prompted her to make particular inquiries on this subject; and Father Mulo's retentive memory supplied her with every instance of that kind which had happened for many years back; but he added, at the close of every example, that such a misfortune having happened to the people he mentioned, could not be considered as a positive proof that

the same had befallen any of the company for whom she was so much interested; and if the like had happened to *some of them*, still it was possible that Laura was not the unfortunate person: 'For which reason,' added he, 'my dear madam, you ought to keep yourself in perfect tranquillity, and hope for the best; because vexing yourself will be of no manner of use, but is rather a tempting of providence, and may draw down upon your head the very misfortune you dread, or some other as bad.' By such reasoning Father Mulo endeavoured, with uninterrupted perseverance, to quiet her fears.

What effect this method of conveying comfort might have produced on the mind of Madame de Seidlits can never be known, for her imagination was too much alarmed to permit her to attend to his discourse: besides, although it may seem a bold word, no ecclesiastic ever possessed the faculty of speaking without being listened to in greater perfection than the reverend Father Mulo.

On leaving Madame de Seidlits, Zeluco mounted his horse, and rode directly towards the place which he had fixed on for the attack. Having perceived his emissaries in waiting, he turned his horse without seeming to take notice of them, and rode slowly backwards and forwards till he saw the carriage coming briskly along. The valet and his companion, with masks on their faces, riding furiously up to the carriage, ordered the driver to stop on pain of having his brains blown out; the driver instantly obeyed, and Jachimo fell from his horse on his knees, supplicating for mercy in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; to whom, after he had recovered his recollection a little, he added St. Januarius.—Father Pedro also prayed with much seeming fervency, invoking the aid of St. Dominic, and a whole host of other saints.

After the valet had taken the ladies purses, which were instantly presented to him, the other fellow dragged Signora Sporza out of the chaise; she exclaimed that every thing had been delivered to them, and attempted to get into the carriage again; but the fellow, standing between

her and it, presented his pistol, which flashed without going off. Zeluco seeing the flash, and hearing the screams of Laura, galloped towards the carriage, hallooing, and threatening the assailants with immediate death if they did not desist; but the fellow, whose pistol had snapped, fearing that he should not be thought to have performed his part properly, if he did not actually fire it, cocked it once more, and fired it off in such a hurried manner, that both the bullets passed the head of Signora Sporza, and one of them lodged in Zeluco's shoulder.

This staggered him a little; but the attackers flying, he came up to the carriage in time to prevent Laura from rolling out of it; she had retained her presence of mind while she considered the assailants simply as robbers; and after delivering their money, seeing Signora Sporza pulled violently out of the carriage, she called to Father Pedro to assist her; but on hearing the pistol fired, which she imagined had killed her friend, she fainted in the chaise. Signora Sporza also was greatly alarmed; but seeing the aggressors fly, she rose from her knees, on which she had sunk when the pistol was fired, and assisted Zeluco and Father Pedro in their endeavours to recover Laura, who, as soon as she recognised Signora Sporza and the father, and understood that the danger was over, exclaimed, 'What blessed angel has delivered us from the ruffians?' Father Pedro immediately answered, 'We all owe our deliverance to Signor Zeluco.' 'Signor Zeluco!' cried Laura, with painful surprise. 'Yes, my daughter,' added he; 'and here he is to receive our grateful acknowledgments.—'We are all highly indebted to you, signor,' added she: 'How providential was your coming!' added Father Pedro.—'Considering the hour of the night,' said Signora Sporza, 'his coming seems miraculously so.'

Zeluco then informed them how he was induced to meet them; that as he drew near the carriage, hearing the shriek of Signora Laura, he had rode up to the ruffians, one of whom, he said, he could have taken, had

he not been more anxious to relieve them than to seize him.

The driver and Jachimo having now recovered from their terror, the carriage was prepared, and the company moved towards the town. Jachimo told the driver as they went, that he had made an observation which he would communicate to him as a friend, because it might be of use on future occasions of the same nature; it was this: that while he continued to implore the first three persons to whom he had addressed his prayers, no interposition had been made in his favour; but that as soon as he began to implore the protection of St. Januarius, Signor Zeluco had appeared for the rescue of the company. 'Certo,' said the coachman, 'St. Januarius takes the greatest care of all his votaries on Mount Vesuvius and the neighbouring district, *ad ogni uccello suo nido è bello*;' but out of sight of the mountain, he assured Jachimo that St. Januarius was as regardless of prayers as his neighbours, and not more to be depended upon than those he complained of.

When the company arrived at the house of Madame de Seidlits, Father Mulo was giving her a circumstantial account of a robbery with assassination, which happened many years before on the road between Portici and Naples; and as he with wonderful accuracy remarked, looking at his watch, much about the hour in which he was then speaking; he also detailed the providential manner in which the murderer was discovered, and how he was broke on the wheel, to the edification, as Father Mulo expressed himself, of all the beholders, and the great comfort of the murdered person's widow.

The powerful faculty hinted above, which the father possessed, and which shone with peculiar lustre in narrative, prevented these anecdotes from affecting Madame de Seidlits so much as they would otherwise have done. The sight of the company which now entered her house relieved her, however, from a set of very disagreeable reflections.

Father Pedro, in the presence of the ladies, gav
the history of their adventure, in which the genero
trepidity of Signor Zeluco made a conspicuous fi
and the watchful care of providence in sending
to their deliverance was mentioned in the most
terms.

Madame de Seidlits then poured out the grateful
sions of her heart in thanks to Zeluco, who modest
knowledged that, on seeing her alarmed at the ladi
returning, and being himself exceedingly uneasy, h
on leaving her immediately mounted his horse, an
loped towards Portici, which he should ever consi
the most fortunate incident of his life, with whateve
sequence the accident which had happened to hi
should be attended.

'Accident!' cried Madame de Seidlits; 'What
dent?' and then perceiving blood on his clothes,—'
signor,' said she, 'you are wounded! send direct
a surgeon!'

Father Pedro, who notwithstanding the blood, ha
sons of his own for thinking that he was not at all,
no dangerous degree hurt, said it would be best th
luco were removed to his own house, where the w
would be examined, more conveniently, and propo
accompany him immediately.

Madame de Seidlits, wringing her hands in the u
grief, begged that all possible care might be taken of
for she should never again know comfort if any ac
should accrue to so worthy a man, particularly, a
she, looking to Laura, on such an occasion.

Her daughter, with more composure, but with v
emotion, begged of Father Pedro not to leave Zelu
his wound was dressed, which she hoped would n
found dangerous.

Father Mulo desired Zeluco to be of good chee
Heaven *seldom* permitted villany of this kind to pa
punished; but that in case this wound should prove
tal, he might *rely upon it*, that the planners of such a

ing attack would be brought to open shame; for, sooner or later, murders were always discovered.

Signora Sporza observed to Zeluco, who by this time was not the least alarmed in the company, that the wound could not be dangerous, as he had been able to sit on horseback while they were coming to town.

Zeluco was then put into a carriage, and slowly transported to his own house, accompanied by Father Pedro, who did not choose to make any particular inquiry, nor to express the surprise he really felt at there being a wound at all; for, as the carriage went slowly, he was afraid of being overheard by the servant that walked by its side. The wounded man himself was silent, except that once he muttered, 'Damn the awkward blockhead!' and afterwards, 'What a cursed blunder!'

As soon as he was placed in his own bedchamber, 'Is the surgeon come?' said he to Father Pedro.

'Do you really wish for a surgeon?' said the father.

'Certainly; don't you see how I bleed?'

'I see blood; but I had hopes it was not from your veins?'

'It is a cursed business; pray send for a surgeon,' cried Zeluco impatiently.—This was done accordingly.

The valet and his accomplice had returned before Zeluco had even reached the town. The former, on hearing that a surgeon was sent for, and seeing blood on his master's arm, was astonished, and cried, 'How is it possible, sir, that you can be wounded? For——'

'Peace, babbler,' said Zeluco.

'Can any thing be more natural,' said Father Pedro, with a sarcastical smile, 'than for pistols to make wounds, especially when fired by two such bloody-minded ruffians. But I must now leave you, signor; you may depend on my prayers for your recovery, and that you may soon reap the fruits of your generous valour.' He then withdrew, convinced that the wound was fictitious, and invented as a natural incident in the farce, which would be bet-

ter acted by the master, the servant, and the surgeon, without his taking any part.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A Medical Consultation.

As Father Pedro went out, a physician and surgeon entered the room together. It was found that the bullet had entered the arm, near the shoulder, and without having injured the bone or joint, was felt beneath the skin on the opposite side.

It was extracted without difficulty after an incision. The doctor and surgeon then retired to another room to consult. The latter was a Frenchman of some humour, a considerable share of shrewdness, and much of a coxcomb.

'This wound is nothing,' said the doctor.

'We must try to make *something* of it however,' replied the surgeon.

'It will heal of itself directly,' resumed the doctor.

'It must therefore not be left to itself,' said the surgeon.

'What farther do you intend,' said the physician; 'little more seems necessary, except applying some fresh lint every day.'

'*Lascia far' a Sant' Antonio,*' replied the surgeon, 'I will take care that his excellency shall not be exposed to danger on the high road for at least a month to come.'

'Unless it be to prescribe some cooling physic, and such a low regimen as will prevent his suffering from want of exercise, I can do nothing,' said the physician.

'That is doing a great deal,' said the surgeon; 'it keeps the patient in low spirits, and renders him obedient.'

'But, after all, how do you intend to treat the wound itself,' said the physician.

'I intend to treat it *secundum artem*,' replied the surgeon.

'*Benè, benè respondisti*,' said the physician; 'and so much for the wound.—Now, pray what say you to the news?' continued the physician, 'they talk of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean.'

'Whether that will take place or not,' said the surgeon, 'depends entirely on the king's pleasure.'

'How so?' said the physician; 'how can his majesty prevent it?'

'By threatening to sink them if they presumed to enter the straits,' replied the surgeon. 'The Toulon fleet will be sufficient.'

'Toulon fleet!' cried the physician; 'why, what king do you mean?'

'Why, the king of France to be sure,' replied the surgeon; 'what other king *can* I mean?'

'*Vi prego di scusarmi*, signor,' cried the physician; 'but in speaking of the king *in* Naples, I thought the king *of* Naples might perhaps be meant.'

'*A fè di Dio*, signor,' replied the surgeon; '*non m'è venuto mai in pensiero*; but I believe,' added he, looking at his watch, 'our consultation has lasted a decent time enough.'

The physician being of the same opinion, they returned to the patient's bedchamber. The doctor ordered a low diet, and cooling ptisans in great abundance.

'What do you think of the wound?' said Zeluco to the surgeon.

'It would be rash to speak decisively at the very first dressing, signor,' said the surgeon.

'But what is your general notion?' resumed Zeluco.

'Why, signor, if my friend here will answer for keeping down the fever, I will do my best to save your excellency's arm.'

'Save my arm!' exclaimed Zeluco, 'I would rather be damned than lose my arm, sir.'

'That may be, signor,' said the surgeon, 'but peo-

ple are not always allowed their choice on such occasions.'

'Zounds, sir!' exclaimed Zeluco; 'Do you think there is any danger of my losing my arm?'

'I am determined to save it, if possible,' said the surgeon, 'and it will afford me great pleasure to succeed.'

Here the physician interfering, begged of Zeluco to be composed, for nothing retarded the cure of wounds more than impatience; he hoped, by the great skill of his friend, every thing would terminate to his satisfaction, provided he would be resigned, and follow the directions that from time to time would be given him.

With much internal chagrin, Zeluco was obliged to assume the appearance of serenity, and he promised to obey the injunctions of these two learned gentlemen.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The French Surgeon.

The following day the physician and surgeon did not think it expedient to take the dressings from the wound, but renewed their injunctions that Zeluco should be kept exceedingly quiet, take his medicines punctually, and strictly adhere to the coolest regimen. As the wound now was more painful than at first, the patient became apprehensive of losing his arm, and complied with the directions given, though not without breaking out frequently into violent execrations on the unlucky chance by which he was reduced to the necessity of suffering such penance.

Madame de Seidlits had sent a message, desiring that the surgeon might call at her house when he left his patient.

He went accordingly, and found Father Mulo with her.

'I am extremely happy, madam,' said the surgeon, 'to have this opportunity of paying you my devoirs; it is an honour I have long wished for. I perceive, by the brilliancy of you looks, that you are in charming health.'

'Pray, sir,' said Madame de Seidlits, with impatience; 'How do you find —?'

'I ask you ten thousand pardons, madam, for interrupting you,' said the surgeon; 'but I beg to know, before you proceed, how the amiable and accomplished young lady your daughter does?'

'My daughter is very well, sir,' answered Madame de Seidlits; 'now will you be so obliging ———'

'You may command whatever is in my power, madam,' said the surgeon, bowing very low.

'Then pray tell me, sir, how you left your patient?'

'I have a great many patients, madam; but I presume your ladyship inquires, at present, for Signor Zeluco.'

'I do, sir, and earnestly beg to know how you left him?'

'Much better than I found him, madam—I have cut a bullet out of him.'

'Poor gentleman!' cried Madame de Seidlits.

'He is not the poorer for that, madam,' said the surgeon; 'he is a great gainer by what has been taken from him.'

'I hope he is in no manner of danger?' said Father Mulo, who was still with her.

'Alas! father,' said the surgeon; 'how often are our hopes fallacious:—a heretic hopes to go to Heaven, which is impossible; is it not, father?'

'That certainly *is* impossible,' said Mulo.

'I knew,' continued the surgeon, 'that you would be fully convinced of that great and comfortable truth.'

'But you do not think this poor gentleman in danger?' said Madame de Seidlits.

'A person of your ladyship's excellent understanding must know,' replied the surgeon, 'that gun-shot wounds are often attended with danger.'

'This is only a pistol-shot wound,' said Father Mulo.

'Very judiciously observed, father,' said the surgeon, '*that* certainly makes a difference; it happens unluckily,

however, that even pistol-shot wounds prove sometimes mortal.'

'The bullet, I understand, passed through his arm *only*,' said Father Mulo.

'Had it passed through his heart *also*, it would have been more dangerous to be sure, father,' said the surgeon.

'You have extracted the ball—I think you said so, sir?' resumed Madame de Seidlits.

'I have, madam, and quite in the manner recommended by Monsieur Lewis at Paris; it is by much the safest. I never made a sweeter incision in my life.'

'It must have been very painful,' said Madame de Seidlits, shrinking like one who suffers.

'Painful!—not in the least, madam!' replied the surgeon; 'I performed it with the greatest ease.'

'I imagine,' said Father Mulo,' the lady meant, that the operation must have been painful to the *patient*.'

'To the *patient*; Oho!' cried the surgeon; 'your ladyship spoke of the *patient*,—did you?'

'I did indeed, sir; I fear he suffered a great deal,' said Madame de Seidlits.

'Why, yes; a good deal perhaps, though I should think not a vast deal neither,—I have seen many suffer more;—in short, there is no knowing,' said the surgeon, carelessly; then added with earnestness, 'but of this I do assure you, madam, that Monsieur Lewis's method is by much the best. I had the honour of being a favourite eléve of his—and in some instances, have improved on his ideas.'

'I dare say, sir,' said Madame de Seidlits, willing that he should withdraw, 'you will do all that can be done for this gentleman. I shall be glad to know how he is after the next dressing. I have heard your skill much commended.'

'You are extremely polite and obliging, madam,' said the surgeon, bowing; 'your ladyship, no doubt, has passed sometime at Paris?'

'I never did, sir.—I shall expect to hear from you to-morrow.'

'I am surprised at that,' said the surgeon; 'I could have sworn that you had lived a considerable time at Paris.'

'Pray, sir,' resumed Father Mulo, 'will you be kind enough, before you go, to say whether or not you think this gentleman's wound will be long in healing; for I have not yet been able to gather from your discourse what your opinion is.'

'The art of surgery, my good father,' replied the surgeon, 'consists in healing wounds *well* and *radically*, not soon and superficially; the last is the art of charlatans.'

'I honour the art of surgery, sir,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'it is one of the most useful that mankind possess, and particularly so to the bravest class of mankind.'

'Your politeness can only be equalled by your excellent understanding, madam,' said the surgeon. 'The art of surgery is not only the most useful, and most honourable, but also the most ancient of all the arts; it can boast higher antiquity than the art of medicine itself.'

'Perhaps it may be so,' said Madame de Seidlits.

'I will have the honour of proving it to your ladyship,' said the surgeon; then coughing and adjusting himself like one going to make a formal harangue, he began—'The earliest race of mankind—'

'I am fully convinced it is as you assert,' said Madame de Seidlits, interrupting him; 'but I must really beg your forgiveness for being obliged to leave you at present. You will be so good as let me know how your patient does after the next dressing?—Your humble servant, sir.—Adieu, father.'

When Madame de Seidlits was withdrawn,—'Is it possible,' cried the surgeon, 'that this lady was never at Paris?'

'She never was, I assure you,' replied Father Mulo.

'That seems very extraordinary,' said the surgeon.

'I had a notion,' resumed the father, 'that there was

a considerable number of people in the world who never were at Paris.'

'Your reverence's notions are all wonderfully well founded,' said the surgeon; 'but my surprise at present proceeds from my not being able to conjecture where or how Madame de Seidlits could acquire so much politeness and liberality of sentiment.'

'She was educated in a convent,' said the father.

'That clears up the matter at once,' said the surgeon; 'for so were you, father, and yet perhaps you never were at Paris no more than the lady.'

'Never in my whole life,' answered Father Mulo.

'Nor at Moscow neither,' added the surgeon.

'No, never,' answered the father; 'though I have *heard* a good deal about *Muscovy*, particularly of late.'

'O, you have?' said the surgeon.

'I have indeed,' answered Father Mulo; 'some people tell me it is larger than Naples. What is your opinion?'

'About what?' said the surgeon; 'I fear I do not quite understand what your reverence means.'

'I only asked which you believed to be the largest city, Naples or Muscovy?'

'Why, I should think Naples the most populous,' answered the surgeon, 'though Muscovy stands upon rather more ground.'

'I had some suspicion of that kind myself,' said Father Mulo.

CHAPTER XLIX.

An Anodyne Sermon.

Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures. Hor.

When Madame de Seidlits left Father Mulo and the surgeon, it was partly to get free of the loquacity of the latter; and also because Laura, who did not choose to appear herself, waited with impatience to know the surgeon's opinion of Zeluco. That young lady had passed a very

disturbed night, owing, in some measure, to the fright, but more to the uneasiness she felt on account of Zeluco's wound, or perhaps rather on account of the occasion on which he had received it; for it is more than probable that Laura would have felt less concern had he received the same wound in any other cause. Of all mankind the person she wished least to be obliged to was Zeluco.

Madame de Seidlits having perceived her daughter's anxiety, although she had herself been agitated by the alarming manner in which the surgeon had spoken, affected a degree of composure which she had not, and spoke to Laura as if there were no doubt of his recovery; she afterwards desired Signora Sporza and Father Mulo to talk the same language to her. The former did so naturally; for there appeared something mysterious and suspicious to her in the whole adventure, and she never once believed him in any danger.

Father Pedro visited Zeluco daily, but never thought proper to ask any particular explanation of the accident by which he was wounded; nor did the latter ever talk to him but on the general supposition that the attack had been made by real robbers. Yet they so far talked without disguise to each other, that the father informed Zeluco of Laura's distress on his account, the mother's precaution in softening the accounts of his illness to her daughter, advising Zeluco, as the best means of keeping alive the interest which that young lady took in him, that he should not be in too great a hurry to announce his perfect recovery; and declaring, at the same time, that he had better hopes than ever of his success.

Several days after the adventure, Father Pedro found the three ladies together, and endeavouring to suit the account he gave of Zeluco with the sentiments he wished to inspire; he said, 'That, for his part, he did not know what to think of Signor Zeluco's state of health; that sometimes the surgeon imagined the wound disposed to heal, that soon after he declared that it had a worse appearance, and threatened the most dangerous consequen-

ces. But what gave him the greatest uneasiness was, that the physician, a man of great skill and penetration, had told him, that he suspected some secret anxiety of mind preyed upon his patient, producing a slow fever, which gradually undermined his strength, and destroyed the effect of the medicines; and he was much afraid would render a wound, which might otherwise have been cured, the apparent cause of his dissolution.' Madame de Seidlits threw a look at Laura, as the father pronounced these words, and the young lady herself betrayed symptoms of great emotion.—' Avaunt, thou prophet of evil!' cried Signora Sporza, with an air of raillery; ' see you not that this audience cannot bear a sermon from the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Nor is there need for such gloomy forebodings. I will be answerable for it, that our heroic knight-errant's wound will heal in due time, in spite of the secret sorrow which preys on his tender heart.'

Signora Sporza continued to slight every idea of danger, and endeavoured to keep up the spirits of her friends, which seemed ready to sink under the artful insinuations of Father Pedro.

Signora Sporza, in consequence of the engagement above mentioned, set out for Rome with her companion a few days after this conversation, having taken an affectionate leave of her two friends, both of whom were a little hurt at the want of concern she displayed on account of the illness of Zeluco, who, they imagined, merited more regard from her than she was willing to allow.

When she departed, Father Pedro circulated, without restraint, such reports as he thought would answer his purpose. One day Madame de Seidlits was told, that Zeluco was a little better, the next a great deal worse; at one time it was given out, that the surgeon feared it might be necessary to amputate his arm as the best means of saving his life. And the father was always at hand to lament, that this generous intrepidity should be attended with such consequences.

One day he filled Madame de Seidlits's mind with the

greatest apprehensions for Zeluco's life; asserting that the agony of his wound was excruciating; that he had not slept for the three last nights, and that the fever threatened his brain.—'What a benevolent and liberal friend,' exclaimed the father, 'are the poor about to lose!' And so he left both the mother and daughter in very great concern.

He had hinted to Zeluco himself, that he intended to give this impression, that he might act accordingly, and give suitable answers to all inquiries made about his health. The father's view was to imprint, in the first place, a strong degree of compassion in the breast of Laura, in the hope that this would render her more favourable towards Zeluco; and he purposed returning that same evening to the ladies with exaggerated accounts of Zeluco's tortures, which, by totally depriving him of sleep, augmented the fever; and when he should perceive Laura's compassion strongly interested, he intended again to urge his suit in the hopes of obtaining some favourable declaration from Laura, in the event of Zeluco's recovery.

This shrewd plan, however, was a little deranged. Father Mulo called on Madame de Seidlits two hours after Pedro had left her. When he had sat a little while, she begged he would be so obliging as to pay a visit to Signor Zeluco, endeavour to see him, and return afterwards to her; for his case, as she was informed, altered every hour, and she did not know whose account to depend upon. Laura joined in this request, that she might be relieved from the reverend father's conversation, which she had always felt uncommonly oppressive.

Father Mulo's connection with Madame de Seidlits's family was known to all Zeluco's servants; therefore, although they had received orders to admit nobody to his chamber except the medical people and Father Pedro, yet they imagined that Father Mulo was meant to be comprehended in the exception. He was accordingly introduced.

But as Zeluco expected no such visit, he was not exactly in the situation he would have chosen, had he known of the father's coming. The wine and sweetmeats which were on the table had been placed there on Father Pedro's account, who was always pleased to find a collation of that kind ready arranged when he called. Father Mulo expressed great satisfaction at seeing him look so much better than he expected, adding, that it would afford consolation to his friends, particularly to Madame de Seidlits, when he should inform them how well he looked.

'Alas! father,' said Zeluco, 'nothing is more deceitful than looks. I am in continual pain. I have not slept at all for these three nights. The physician thinks I might be better if I could get some sleep; but nothing he orders has the effect, the agony of my arm is so violent. Oh!—'

'You had best take a glass of wine; allow me to help you,' said the father.

'I dare not taste wine,' replied Zeluco; 'but I beg you will help yourself to some; and pray, my good father, try at the same time, if you can, to taste those biscuits; you seem fatigued with walking in this sultry weather. There is a napkin to dry you with; you are in a very violent perspiration. Pray take another glass of wine.—I will endeavour to suppress my complaints while you refresh yourself. The *lachryma Christi* is excellent; do taste it.'

Father Mulo acknowledged that he was indeed very much fatigued, having visited many penitents that morning, and walked a great deal. After he had eat and drank very plentifully, thinking himself bound to repay Zeluco for his agreeable repast, he prepared to do it in the most ample manner in the only coin he ever carried about with him, a consolatory exhortation. He turned, therefore, from the bufet, and addressed himself to Zeluco in these words.—'The accident which has befallen you, my dear son, in all human probability, is the most fortunate that could have happened; you have had time

ring your confinement to reflect on your past life, and repent of your manifold iniquities. As for the pain, it temporary and trivial in comparison of the pangs which ners endure in purgatory. Of what account are the volous enjoyments of sense? of what avail are all sub-tary——?' &c. &c. &c.

In this strain, and with an uniform monotonous voice, ghtily resembling the drone of a bee, the father conti-ed his harangue with wonderful perseverance and shut es, as was his custom when he prayed and admonished. is difficult to say how long he might have continued, d he not been surprised into a full stop, in the midst of sentence full of unction, by the snoring of Zeluco; o unwilling to interrupt the relation of Laura, and un-e to attend to what he said, had been long lulled into ep by the lethargic hum of his voice.

Father Mulo opening his eyes, perceived the situation Zeluco; as it was no ways uncommon to the father to d many of his audience in the same condition at the l of his sermons, he betrayed no marks of surprise on present occasion; but after having with wonderful nposure finished what remained of his bottle, and eat a r more biscuits, he walked softly out of the room, told servant that his master had most providentially fallen o repose, and desired that he should on no account be turbed till he awaked of himself.

Father Mulo, not choosing to be troubled with in-iries into particulars, sent a general message to Ma-ne de Seidlits, importing that Signor Zeluco was a at deal better. This afforded much pleasure to both mother and daughter; and the same evening, when ther Pedro called on purpose to strengthen the im-ssion he had already made, they congratulated him on comfortable accounts they had received of Zeluco.

Father Pedro had not seen nor heard of him since he d been last with the ladies, he was a good deal surpris-at the intelligence; he could see no motive Zeluco ld have for deviating from the plan that had been set-

tled between them, and therefore declared his disbelief of the account which the ladies had received. 'Have you seen Signor Zeluco since you were here?' said Madame de Seidlits. Father Pedro owned that he had not.—'Then our accounts are later than yours, and may be depended on; they come from Father Mulo, who was with Signor Zeluco, and sent me the message after he left him.'

'There is some mistake,' said Pedro, angrily; 'he cannot possibly be better.'

'One would imagine, however,' said Laura, 'that there is nothing to put you out of humour in the intelligence we have received, and which it is certainly possible *may* be true.'

'The reason that I have to fear that it is not,' resumed Father Pedro, recollecting himself, 'makes me averse to your adopting an opinion which will give double uneasiness when found to be false.'

'Whether it is false or true may be soon ascertained,' said Madame de Seidlits, who immediately sent a footman to inquire. The messenger returned in a few minutes, and informed them, that Signor Zeluco had been asleep for several hours; and that he slept so calmly, there was every reason to hope he would be greatly better when he awoke.

'Heaven be praised!' exclaimed the father; 'some powerful soporific must have been administered to produce such a lasting effect.'

Zeluco was at length awoke by Father Pedro himself, who was greatly irritated at what had happened, and burned with impatience to vent his ill-humour.

'You seized a very seasonable moment truly for slumbering,' said he, after a long altercation.

'I seized it not,' replied Zeluco; 'I am hoarse with telling you, that, in spite of all I could do, it seized me.'

'After I had melted them with the accounts of your sufferings, assuring them you had not slept for three nights, when I returned with the strongest hopes of im-

proving on this favourable disposition of Laura's mind,' continued Pedro, 'it was too provoking to find them informed that you were in perfect ease, sound asleep, and the effect of all my labour annihilated.'

'If the whole world had been to be annihilated, I could not help it,' cried Zeluco; 'your brother Mulo has power to lull Prometheus asleep, in spite of all the efforts of his vulture. I'll tell you, father,' added Zeluco, with vehemence, as if he intended a stronger illustration, '*your* own eloquence is scarcely more powerful to rouse and animate, than *his* drowsy monodies are to benumb the senses.'

This last stroke softened the wrath, and smoothed the brow of Father Pedro. 'Well, well, my friend,' said he, with a smile, 'repining at what is past can do no good; all may yet be repaired; that this long and unexpected repose has been of service to your health must not be denied to the ladies, but remember that you are to recover very slowly, and that you may possibly relapse.'

After a consultation of some length, they separated as good friends as ever.

CHAPTER L.

Il est aussi facile de se tromper soi-même sans s'en appercevoir, qu'il est difficile de tromper les autres sans qu'ils s'en apperçoivent.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

About this time, Madame de Seidlits received accounts of the failure of a house at Frankfort, in which her husband had placed most part of the money he had left for the use of his widow and daughter. In the same house also was the residue of the money produced by the sale of her furniture and other effects, when she left Germany; part of which had served to defray the expense of her journey, the rest she had ordered to be remitted to her banker at Naples, and expected every day to hear that this was done, when the sad news of the failure arrived.

This news was accompanied, as is usual on such occasions, with the comfortable assertion, that it was only a temporary stoppage of payment; for that the house would pay all they owed in time. However that might be, Madame de Seidlits felt very great immediate inconveniency from the accident; she had already contracted debts at Naples, for the discharge of which her sole reliance was upon this money: she concealed this misfortune from Laura, to save her the shock of such calamitous news, and in hopes that she might in a few posts have the first statement confirmed, that there would finally be no loss by the bankruptcy. In this distressing situation she lamented the absence of Signora Sporza, who was the only person to whom she could freely speak on such a subject; and she once thought of writing to her for a small supply of money for her immediate occasions; but fearing that this might not be convenient, or perhaps not agreeable, and having naturally a great reluctance to lie under a pecuniary obligation, she determined rather to part with her jewels, even those which she had received from her husband, and on that account valued far above their intrinsic worth; she accordingly applied to a jeweller, and sold them for a sum sufficient for the discharge of her most urgent debts.

Father Pedro having seen the jeweller, with whom he was acquainted, coming out of Madame de Seidlits's house, entered into conversation with him, and endeavoured, from a prying disposition not uncommon to monks, to sift from him what his business with her was; for he well knew that Madame de Seidlits was not in circumstances to purchase jewels. The jeweller, in consequence of her injunctions, evaded his questions, which more and more excited the curiosity of Father Pedro, who did not rest till he learned from one of the jeweller's workmen what his master's business with Madame de Seidlits was.

This gave the father an idea of the distress of her circumstances far beyond what he had hitherto entertained, and inspired him at the same time with fresh hopes of

success in the scheme he was so sanguinely engaged in. He immediately communicated the intelligence to Zeluco, adding, that he imagined it would be no longer necessary for him to exaggerate the uneasiness of his wound, but rather to admit the idea which the ladies had already received of its being better; although his general health was still delicate, this plan would allow him the benefit of enjoying the fresh air, the pleasure sometimes of seeing and paying his court to Laura, while the perplexed state in which the mother's circumstances seemed to be, with the admonitions which the father undertook on every proper occasion to give both to the mother and daughter, might at length dispose them to listen to his proposal.

Zeluco waited on Madame de Seidlits and Laura the following day; they both manifested sincere satisfaction at seeing him. Madame de Seidlits cautioned him, with all the solicitude of friendship, to be very careful of himself till his health should be fully restored; and Laura, impressed with a sense of obligation, and softened by the dangers in which he had been, behaved with more cordiality than she had ever shewn to him before. He continued to visit them very frequently, and was always received in the same manner.

Father Pedro congratulated him on the very friendly reception which he met with, from which he augured an agreeable answer when he should next speak to Madame de Seidlits on the subject of Zeluco's suit, which he hinted he intended to do very soon; but the same circumstances which had imparted this confidence to the mind of the father, revived Zeluco's original hopes of obtaining Laura without marriage. He imagined that the proud spirit of both mother and daughter, humbled by misfortune, and terrified by the horrors of impending poverty, would in a short time acquiesce in the settlements he determined to make, unclogged with the ceremony he detested.

He wished not, therefore, that the father, by a precipitate renewal of the proposal of marriage, should render it

more difficult for him to succeed upon his own terms, as he expected, though perhaps at a more distant period.

The wound in his arm was now on the point of healing; but the fears he had undergone, the medicines he had taken, the regimen he had followed, had weakened him considerably, giving him also an appearance of sickness, which corresponded with the accounts that had been spread of his danger, and enabled him to support a delay in the gratification of his desires with a degree of patience which he could not have displayed had he been in perfect health.

He begged of Father Pedro, therefore, not to urge his former suit at present, expressing an apprehension of disgusting the ladies by too much importunity; then talked of his sorrow at the thoughts of the distress they were in, wished that the father would prevail on Madame de Seidlits to accept of a sum of money, with which he directly presented him, on the pretence of its coming from a person who suspected her situation, but was unknown to Fether Pedro and to herself, and was determined to conceal the transaction from all the world.

Although Zeluco behaved on this occasion with a good deal of address, spoke with great gentleness and in plausible terms, Father Pedro's penetration pervaded his hypocrisy, and he at once saw his motive and drift.

Father Pedro, it must be confessed, was not a monk of that rigid self-denial and sublime piety that will entitle him, an hundred years after his death, to canonization.

Had Laura been inclined to meet Zeluco on his own terms, very possibly he would have winked at the connection, or given her absolution on easy terms; but his mind revolted at the thought of being accessary to betraying her: besides, the virtues of Madame de Seidlits and her daughter commanded his entire esteem; whereas the money he had from time to time received from Zeluco had not produced a single sentiment in his favour. He wished well to both the former, and would have cheerfully served them in any thing not attended with great incon-

veniency to himself; but he would not have abstained from a pinch of snuff when his nose required it, to have saved the other from the gallows.—For these reasons Father Pedro refused the money; saying, he was sufficiently acquainted with Madame de Seidlits, to know that such an offer would offend her; that as for his own part he had been induced to interfere in this business, with the sole view of rendering him the most essential service that, in his opinion, one man could do to another, by assisting him in his avowed inclination of marrying one of the most accomplished, beautiful, and virtuous women in Europe: 'But,' continued he, 'signor, if you have altered your mind, my interference of course must end here.'

To this Zeluco replied, 'that he was sensible of what he owed to the father; that he would ever take the warmest interest in both the ladies; but wished not to have his former proposal pressed on them at that particular time.'

CHAPTER LI.

Les passions les plus violentes nous laissent quelquefois du relâche; mais la vanité nous agite toujours.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO, who was of a most suspicious temper, now imagined that Father Pedro acted in concert with Madame de Seidlits, and that the desperate state of her affairs had produced an alteration in the sentiments of her daughter, of which they had informed him that he might push a renewal of the proposal of marriage without delay. He thought also that the monk's zeal had made him overshoot his commission, by imprudently mentioning the circumstance of the sale of the jewels; for he was convinced, that one reason for their wishing to have the ceremony speedily concluded, was to prevent *this* and other proofs of their poverty from appearing. As he now believed, therefore, that it was in his power to obtain Laura in marriage whenever he pleased, that very conviction acting on his capricious and vicious disposition, disinclined

him from it, and determined him to renew his original scheme of seduction, which he flattered himself the distresses of poverty, joined to the credit of his late exploit, would greatly facilitate.

Laura, though unacquainted with the disagreeable accounts which her mother had received from Germany, or with the exact state of the circumstances in which she had been left by her father, knew in general that they were narrow, and therefore would have been pleased with a more severe system of economy than was agreeable to her mother. A knowledge of this was one reason why Madame de Seidlits had always represented their situation in the most favourable light to her daughter.

This young lady, notwithstanding the admiration she never failed to excite, was by no means fond of appearing often in public. What are called public amusements, she had but a very moderate relish for, and stood in no need of them as a resource for passing her time.

She had such a taste for reading, as afforded a very pleasing source of entertainment and improvement to her mind, without inclining her to despise or neglect other occupations becoming her age and sex. Her natural good sense, taste, and accomplishments, while they rendered her independent of company, made her more entertaining in it; without being over-reserved, nothing could be more modest than her deportment; and very few women possessed the talent of conversing in a more easy and agreeable manner. Her mind being undisturbed by passion, serene through innocence, naturally cheerful, and easily amused, she could have lived happy in a very limited society, and in the delightful occupation of promoting her mother's happiness, and that of all around her.

Madame de Seidlits was somewhat of a different character; although Laura was the warmest object of her affection, yet she stood in need of amusements, and had a taste for a greater share of elegant superfluities than her revenue could supply. Had she conformed herself exactly to her daughter's taste, they could have lived free

from debt upon the pension and interest of the money left by her husband; but as she often followed her own, they must have been embarrassed in a short time, even although their banker's failure had not happened.

The particular article of expense which gave Laura most uneasiness, was what regarded her dress. Her own taste in dress was elegantly simple; and, in her, was so becoming, that all who beheld her, were of opinion that additional ornament would tend to diminish the lustre of her beauty; yet, when in compliance with her mother's taste she adopted ornaments to the height of the mode, the same beauty shone conspicuous through all the variations, and in spite of the extravagances of fashion.

While Madame de Seidlits endeavoured to assume the appearance of serenity and cheerfulness before Laura, she could not resist a real depression of spirits. She saw the necessity of retrenching the limited plan of expense she had with difficulty hitherto observed, and was uncertain whether any system of economy would relieve her from a species of distress which her spirit could ill support, and which she felt with keener anguish on Laura's account—who in reality could have supported the misfortune which was so carefully concealed from her, infinitely better than her mother.

Meanwhile, Zeluco visited Madame de Seidlits with most assiduous punctuality, and was always received with a cordial welcome. He saw the dejection of Madame de Seidlits, and the anxiety of Laura, with secret satisfaction and apparent concern; he imputed both to the distress of their circumstances, and was in daily expectation that M adame de Seidlits would apply to him for relief, which he imagined would entitle him to still greater familiarity in the family, involve her in repeated obligations to himself, and finally terminate in the success of his base designs upon the honour of Laura.

Zeluco's passion was of the grossest nature; he called it love, but with more propriety, even at its height, it might have been denominated hatred; it was entirely

selfish, unconnected with sentiment, or the happiness of its object; even in the midst of desire, he felt resentment against Laura, for the neglect and indifference which she had evinced towards him.

He took every opportunity, when he found Madame de Seidlits alone, of insinuating a desire of obliging her, and lamented, with mildness and much respect, that she was so reserved, and seemed unwilling even in the smallest instance to give him the pleasure of being of service to her.

He sometimes, on Madame de Seidlits being called out, was left for a few minutes with Laura; to her he expressed the most tender concern for her mother's health, 'which he dreaded was not so good as usual; was afraid of some concealed anguish, either in her body or mind, and with the most insinuating solicitude begged to know whether Laura suspected what it was: not that he presumed to make too particular an inquiry, only in general, whether she did not suspect that her mother had some secret affliction, and whether it was bodily or mental.'

Laura's answers on all such occasions imported, 'that she hoped he was mistaken in imagining that any thing particular disturbed her mother; but even if it was so, she would be cautious of prying into what her parent judged proper to conceal.'

In the meanwhile, Madame de Seidlits flattered herself that Laura began to view Zeluco with more favourable eyes than formerly, and entertained hopes that she would at length consent to his proposals: she was determined however to leave her to herself, and adhere to the promise she had given, never to solicit her on the subject. But she found means, without apparent design, of leaving them frequently, for a considerable space of time, together, in the expectation that he would gradually strengthen Laura's disposition in his favour, and seize some happy occasion of renewing his suit, for the success of which she was more anxious than ever.

The idea that Laura, whom she justly thought formed

for adding lustre to the highest and most brilliant rank of life, should undergo the mortifications of poverty, was what she could bear with less firmness, than the thought, horrid as it was, of mortifications of the same nature occurring to herself. Here Madame de Seidlits fell into a very general error, and what parents are peculiarly liable to, in the establishing of their children in marriage. Her daughter's happiness, not her own, was what she had chiefly in view; but in estimating this, her own ideas of happiness, not her daughter's, were what she chiefly considered.

Laura had remarked some appearance of dejection in her mother's spirits before it was hinted to her by Zeluco; but had not made any inquiry about the cause, partly because she hoped it proceeded from no cause of importance, and partly for the reason she had given to Zeluco.

She had remarked that her mother had less dejection in Zeluco's company than when he was not present; on this account she herself was pleased with his visits; she thought herself under great obligations to him, and in consequence of these sentiments, the whole of her conduct was so much altered, that he became persuaded not only that her former prejudices were overcome, but that she had conceived a great partiality for him. He was much less surprised at this, than he had been formerly at her having viewed him with indifference; which his vanity never permitted him to think was natural, but rather the artificial offspring of Signora Sporza's malice. But she being now at a distance, he fondly believed that his personal accomplishments began to operate the same effect on the heart of Laura, which, in his opinion, they usually did on the hearts of women of sensibility and discernment.

Madame de Seidlits had for some time expected letters from a friend at Berlin, who had engaged to write to her the real state of her banker's affairs, and how much he would be able to pay his creditors, as soon as the trustees appointed for that business should make their report. Se-

mined villain from his purpose, 'You do not seem to relish this so much, signor.'

'I relish,' cried he, 'every thing you do, and every thing you say; and beg to be heard on a subject of infinite importance to my happiness.'

'You have a right, signor, to expect to be heard by me on any subject which you yourself have not agreed to avoid,' said Laura, with a solemn and serious air, which the impassioned manner in which he had spoken, obliged her to assume.

Although Zeluco was a little surprised at the sudden alteration which had taken place in the features of Laura, he resumed his rapturous tone: 'How can I avoid expressing my admiration of beauty so angelic?' cried he, throwing himself on his knee, and attempting to seize her hand.

'Whatever you have to say, signor,' said Laura, withdrawing her hand, and speaking with firmness and dignity, 'you will certainly speak more at your own ease, and to my satisfaction, by keeping your seat.'

'Hear me, madam,' said Zeluco, embarrassed and overawed.

'I will hear nothing,' replied she, 'while you continue in that posture;—it is too ridiculous.'

Zeluco rose.—'Now, sir,' said she, 'what have you to say?'

'I am much concerned, madam,' resumed he, hesitating, and entirely driven from his purpose; 'I am sorry, I say, that I have offended you;—but I really flattered myself, that after the marks of regard which I had the good fortune to—but those are trifles.—My esteem and regard are unbounded,—and the honour I proposed,—that is, the happiness of calling you mine—My fortune, my life, I consider as nothing—that is, I mean, when put in competition.'—In this incoherent manner he went on without knowing what he said.

There is a dignity and elevation in virtue which over-

awes the most daring profligate. No man of sense, however free in his morals, ever attempted a woman, till he imagined that she had some inclination he should. Let him use what delicate terms he pleases, to what purpose can he be supposed to express his own wishes, if he does not suspect that she has the same wishes with himself? This is the true point of view in which women ought to consider addresess of this nature—In what other point of view can they be considered? A woman is solicited to grant what dishonours herself. Well, her solicitor, if he is not a fool, will not, in conscience, expect that she will stoop to this without a motive, or merely to please him; what then does he expect? Why, that she will consent to please herself.

The coolness and modest dignity of Laura's manner gave at once such a check to Zeluco, that he did not discover his aim. She saw only his embarrassment, which she imputed to his being conscious of having broken the engagement which he had entered into, not to renew his proposal of marriage; for, although she had been surprised, and displeased with the manner in which he had addressed her, yet she never once suspected his real scheme.

Willing, therefore, to relieve his confusion, and to be quite certain of what he meant; she, with a milder aspect, addressed him in these words.—' Signor Zeluco, I wish to know whether I am to construe what you say into a renewal of your former proposal.'—Although conscious that she mistook his intention, he answered her question by a bow.—' Then,' resumed she, ' I must repeat what I formerly declared on that occasion; I am truly sensible of the honour which your opinion does me. I should be happy to have any proper opportunity of shewing the sense of obligation which I have for the generous services which you rendered me. You are entitled to my lasting gratitude—more is not in my power to bestow;—and gratitude alone would, in a wife, be a poor return for the generous love you profess. After this avowal, and de-

claring with the same breath,' continued she, 'that the proposals you made, in point of liberality, exceed my utmost wish; it is evident, that my reason for declining them is of a nature not to be overcome, and ought therefore to be an obstacle of as great weight with you as it is with me. Indeed, if I had not been persuaded that it had at length appeared so in your eyes, I should have taken care to avoid any occasion for an explanation, equally disagreeable for you to hear, and me to repeat.'

Having said this, she withdrew to another room, and left Zeluco so much surprised and confounded, that he remained fixed to the spot for some minutes before he recovered presence of mind sufficient to return to his own house.

He was now convinced, that all his conjectures were erroneous, and that, notwithstanding domestic distresses, so far from having any design upon him, Laura was determined never to accept of him as a husband. He had not pondered long on this, till, in proportion as his fears of losing her augmented, his desire to marry her increased, and before the ensuing morning he would have purchased at the highest price that very situation which, the day before, he dreaded being drawn into, and had determined to use all his address to avoid.

He plainly perceived, that her reason for refusing him proceeded from dislike; but although this conviction rankled in his breast with the severest anguish, he could not refuse his admiration of the delicacy and propriety of her sentiments, the candour and dignity with which they were expressed; while the beauty and elegance of her face and person never had appeared more attractive.

CHAPTER LIII.

Nullæ animum pietas, materniaque nomina frangunt.
OVID.

He now regretted the language he had held to Father Pedro, and resolved to renew his confederacy with him on the basis on which it had formerly stood, resolving at the same time, that in one shape or other she should be his, whatever danger or guilt might attend the accomplishment of his desires.

Ever since their last conversation, Father Pedro had kept a watchful eye upon Zeluco, being suspicious that he meditated some design upon Laura which he durst not avow. These suspicions he intended to communicate to Madame de Seidlits, but he was prevented by Zeluco's entreating him to renew the matrimonial treaty. He endeavoured to give some plausible reason for his former behaviour, and Pedro was too well pleased with his present disposition to criticize with much severity his late conduct. But he was sincerely sorry that Laura seemed so determined to reject a measure which, in his eyes, appeared absolutely necessary in the present state of her mother's circumstances.

He again spoke to Madame de Seidlits on the subject of Zeluco's addresses to Laura, enumerating the advantages that would result to herself, as well as to her daughter, from this alliance.

Madame de Seidlits thanked him for the interest he seemed to take in her family, adding, 'That perhaps she saw the advantages of such an alliance in the same light that *he* did, and had stronger reasons than he was acquainted with for wishing that Laura were of the same way of thinking. But having the most complete conviction of the good sense, virtuous inclinations, and dutiful disposition of her daughter, to whom her approbation of Zeluco was perfectly known; she was resolved to adhere to her engagement, not to press her farther on that sub-

ject. There never was one human creature, father,' continued she, 'who had a stronger desire to oblige another than Laura has to oblige me; she knows that few things could give me so much pleasure as her consenting to marry him; yet she continues to reject him. What can this proceed from but a rooted dislike? Whether this be well or ill-founded, it would equally render her miserable to be united to a person she so dislikes; and it would be the height of cruelty in me to exert maternal influence in such a cause.'

Father Pedro said, 'He feared that Laura sacrificed her happiness to an ill-grounded prejudice.'

'She shall, at least, not sacrifice it to my importunity,' replied Madame de Seidlits.

The efforts which Madame de Seidlits was obliged to make, to conceal the bad state of her affairs from Laura, to appear cheerful while in reality she was sad, and to adhere to her promise and resolution of giving no hint to her daughter in favour of Zeluco, hurt her health; she lost her appetite, grew thin, and uncommonly pale: when any body took notice of this, by an affected cheerfulness, and by assertions which her whole appearance contradicted, she rendered her illness more visible and more affecting.

'Alas! madam,' said Laura, 'why will you conceal the cause of your illness?'

'I am not ill,' replied she, with a sickly smile.

'Let this be decided,' said Laura, 'by a physician.'

'Indeed, my dear, a physician could be of no service to me.'

'I am certain you are not well—you are always sorrowful.'

'Can physicians cure sorrow?'

'You have then some secret sorrow,' cried Laura, catching at her mother's last expression, as if it had been an avowal.—'Tell me—O tell me the cause of your affliction;—confide in me,—trust your Laura.'

'I do confide in you, my beloved girl;—I could trust

my soul with you;—but you alarm yourself without a cause. —I am happy, my love, in your affection and goodness.'

Laura could not refrain from tears at these expressions of her mother, but finding that she declined to acknowledge the cause of her uneasiness, she pressed her no farther: perceiving, however, that her mother's dejection of spirits continued, and that she became more and more emaciated, the young lady was at last so greatly alarmed, that she communicated her fears to Father Pedro, entreating his counsel.

Hitherto he had abstained from the subject, in expectation that Laura would adopt this very measure.

'I have been as uneasy as you can be, my dear daughter, at the visible alteration in your mother's spirits and health; and observing that she avoided giving any reason for it, I could not help endeavouring, by every means I could think of, to discover whether she had received any news to disturb her, or what the cause of such dejection could be, that every possible method might be tried for its removal.'

'And have you discovered the cause?' cried Laura, impatiently.

Father Pedro had heard of the failure of the banker; he began by informing her of what he had learned on that head.

Laura was in some degree relieved by this account; her imagination had figured something worse: she dreaded that some disease of an incurable nature afflicted her mother, which, out of tenderness to her daughter, she concealed.

'The distress which this man's misfortune brings will be temporary,' said she; 'he will surely pay some proportion, if not the whole of his debts. My mother feels the present inconveniency more on my account than her own. I will show her how light it sits on my mind, and how cheerfully I can conform to any circumstances.—The king's pension remains—the house here, and the farm, remain—A little time will make my mother forget this

loss; she will recover her health, and I shall again be happy.'

The father then mentioned the circumstance of selling the jewels.

This affected Laura at first, because it was a proof of her mother's immediate distress; but soon after, she said, 'I am glad of it, it will put her at her ease for some time at least,—perhaps till the banker is able to pay part of what he owes. I am much happier, father, than I was before I knew the whole source of my dear mother's low spirits.'

'I wish,' said the father, 'this were the whole.'

'O! merciful heaven!' cried Laura; 'What! is there more?'

'Shall I speak,' said Pedro, 'my real sentiments?'

'Yes, certainly,' cried Laura, trembling.

'Without any cover or disguise?' added he.

'I did not think you had ever used any,' said Laura.

'When we are obliged to blame those we love,' resumed he, 'it is natural to do it in the mildest manner.'

'If I have failed in my duty to my mother, use the severest,' said Laura.

The monk then reminded her, that her mother had always entertained a favourable opinion of Signor Zeluco, which had been confirmed and augmented by time and more intimate acquaintance; that she had heard his proposal of marriage with great satisfaction; for few things are more agreeable to a prudent and affectionate mother, than to see her daughter united in marriage with a man deserving her esteem; that on finding her daughter's ideas different from her's on this subject, she had sacrificed her own, and with a generosity which few parents possess, had never again given her a hint on the subject; but it was even then pretty evident the sacrifice had cost her a good deal: that Zeluco's gallant behaviour since that time, and the very important service he had rendered her, had renewed and sharpened her mother's original wishes, that so deserving a man were as agreeable to

her daughter as to herself, and probably had inspired her with fresh hopes that his conduct would produce that effect on such a generous and grateful heart as Laura's: that being disappointed in these flattering expectations at a moment when her own private affairs were so much deranged, had, he feared, corroded the breast of Madame de Seidlits, and was the true cause of all her inquietude; for she was endued with that noble and exalted affection which inclined her to be ready to communicate to her daughter the largest portion of all her comforts, and endeavour to keep to herself the whole of what was painful in their common lot, as appeared conspicuous in her concealing from Laura the bankruptcy which so cruelly affected their circumstances, and allowing the whole vexation of that unexpected misfortune to prey upon her own spirits, and undermine her health.

Here the father paused, to give Laura an opportunity of speaking: but perceiving that she kept her eyes fixed on the ground, and seemed unable to make any reply, he added, 'That, upon the whole, it was very difficult for him to offer any advice, or point out a remedy; because, he acknowledged that Laura's taste, even her prejudices, ought to have weight in the choice of a husband, and that it would be hard to blame her for indulging them. He would not venture to assert, that religion required her to sacrifice them, as Providence certainly might, if it thought proper, find other means of preserving the health of her mother; and might, in its own good time, free that worthy woman from her present difficulties, and prevent her future life from being embittered with penury, which her elegant taste and liberal disposition could so ill endure.'

'Father,' said Laura, whose eyes were now overflowing, 'I am unable at present to converse with you,—leave me to myself,—I will, if I can, talk with you more fully to-morrow morning.'—They parted.

CHAPTER LIV.

Fallit te incautam pietas tua.— VIRG.

LAURA continued reflecting on every thing that the monk had said, and insinuated—Zeluco's disinterested passion—his kindness to her mother—the obligation he had laid on herself—her mother's wishes, at first so plainly signified, and afterwards with such delicacy suppressed—her maternal tenderness through all her life, particularly displayed by her endeavour to conceal the affair of the jewels and the bankruptcy;—and, finally, the declining state of her mother's health, which filled her with the most alarming apprehensions.

In consequence of revolving those considerations in her mind, her dislike to Zeluco began to appear in her own eyes an unreasonable prejudice, which gratitude and filial affection, with united voice, called upon her to overcome.

The next day Laura informed her mother that she was willing to bestow her hand on Signor Zeluco. Joy was very strongly mixed with the surprise which appeared in Madame de Seidlits's countenance. Yet she addressed Laura in these terms.—'I desire, my dear, that no sacrifice may be made to any supposed wish of mine on this occasion; I assured you formerly, and I repeat it now, that I think you have a full right in an affair of this nature to follow your own inclinations.'

Laura replied, that this alteration of sentiment had taken place in consequence of her serious reflections on Signor Zeluco's conduct to them both.

Madame de Seidlits then embracing her daughter, expressed her satisfaction in the most affectionate terms; and communicated the glad tidings to Father Pedro, who was then entering, and immediately joined in Madame de Seidlits's congratulations.

Laura, however, said, that as she had, in a very serious and formal manner, refused Zeluco when he last made his

court to her, it was very possible he might since that time have altered his sentiments as well as herself.

'That I can answer for is not the case,' said Father Pedro.

'There is no need of any one's answering for it,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'the truth will appear of itself. If Signor Zeluco does not shew as much ardour as ever to obtain my daughter's hand, he never shall obtain it with my consent.'

Laura, smiling, thanked her mother for being so punctilious where she was concerned; and said, she would explain herself in a letter to Signor Zeluco, which she hoped the father would deliver to him.

Madame de Seidlits objected to her writing. The father, she said, might, if he pleased, acquaint Signor Zeluco that her daughter was more favourably disposed towards him than formerly, and then leave him to take his course.

Laura said, if her mother would trust to her expressing herself with propriety on a subject of so much delicacy, she would prefer writing, as there was one point that required explanation.

'I have perfect confidence in your prudence, my dear,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'write what you think proper.' She then left Laura and Father Pedro together.

Laura directly wrote what follows.—

'SIGNOR ZELUCO,

'In the conversation I lately had with you, I candidly told you my sentiments; with the same sincerity I now inform you they are altered; and that I am ready to accept of your proposal. It will not surprise me if such apparent levity should induce you to renounce the too favourable opinion which you had of me; should that be the case, you certainly can have no scruple in declaring

'It is proper that I should farther inform you, that since I last saw you, I have learnt that, by the failure of

a house at Berlin, great part of the money left by my father for the use of my mother, and which would have eventually come to me, is, in all probability, irrecoverably lost.

'LAURA SEIDLITS.'

Having sealed this letter, she gave it to Father Pedro, who carried it directly to Zeluco, whom he found alone in his garden, ruminating a half-digested plan of a very atrocious nature, the object of which was the possession of Laura.

The monk announced by his countenance that he brought agreeable news, and delivered to him Laura's letter; which, in spite of the cold terms in which it was conceived, as it pointed a more speedy and safe road to the gratification of his desires, filled him with pleasure, and entirely dissipated the dark and desperate purposes over which his mind was brooding.

He told Father Pedro that he would himself be the bearer of the answer to the letter; and immediately waited on Madame de Seidlits and Laura with all the expressions of joy usual on similar occasions.

From this moment there was a visible change for the better in the spirits and health of Madame de Seidlits; she was now convinced that her daughter had overcome her groundless dislike of Zeluco, was secured in a comfortable and genteel situation for life; of course nine-tenths of her anxiety were removed. Laura was rejoiced at the favourable alteration in her mother, reflected with satisfaction on the efforts she herself had made for the sake of a parent whom she tenderly loved, and flattered herself that an union agreed to on her part from such a pious motive, would be more fortunate than could naturally have been expected, considering the extreme indifference, to call it by no stronger name, which she felt for her intended husband.

Zeluco soon became urgent with Madame de Seidlits that an early day might be fixed on for the marriage ce-

remony; saying, that he would in the meantime order the settlements to be made according to the terms formerly proposed.

She expressed a desire that the ceremony might be postponed at least till the return of Signora Sporza from Rome; one reason of Zeluco's impatience was, that it might be over before her return; dreading a delay, or perhaps a total prevention from that quarter; but, without giving any hint of such fears, he earnestly insisted on the ceremony's taking place immediately after the settlements were ready; urging that Signora Sporza would be most agreeably surprised to find that all was over at her return; and that it would give him double pleasure to salute her on their first meeting, not as a person intended to be, but who actually was, his relation. Madame de Seidlits agreed to leave it to Laura's decision, promising, at Zeluco's request, not to write to Signora Sporza till the point should be determined.

He knew that Laura wished the ceremony should be private; he directed Father Pedro to hint to her that this would be impossible after Signora Sporza's return, whose decided taste for parade and ostentation they all knew.

Laura was more easily brought to agree to an early day than was expected; having already given her consent, despising all affected delays, and wishing to have every thing conducted with as much privacy as the nature of the case would admit, she decided for the earliest day that had been mentioned. Besides the motives already mentioned, there was another which influenced this unfortunate young lady more than all the rest; she felt her original reluctance to any connection with Zeluco threatening to return; and she wished the ceremony over, that it might be no longer in her own power to shrink from what she now thought both her duty and honour required her to perform.

The writings were prepared, and an early day appointed for the private performance of the marriage.

During this interval the heart of Laura, endowed with the most exquisite sensibility, and formed for the purest and most delicate sensations of love, was not agitated with those tender fears and pleasing emotions which fill the virgin's bosom at her approaching union with the beloved object of her wishes; she, unhappy maiden! felt an hourly increasing aversion to the man to whom she was destined to plight her faith, which all the struggles of her reason could not subdue. Her resolution, however, enabled her, in a great measure, to conceal what her reason could not conquer, and her efforts for this purpose rendered the pangs of her heart the more acute.

The night preceding the day of her marriage she was disturbed with gloomy forebodings, distracted with horrid dreams, and with terrors of a confused nature, which darted like lightning in a black and stormy night across her clouded imagination.

She arose early, endeavoured to banish those dismal apprehensions from her breast, and assumed as much serenity as she possibly could at the approach of her mother, who imputed the marks of disturbance that still remained in the countenance of Laura to no uncommon cause; yet all the endearments of maternal affection which Madame de Seidlits lavished on her daughter, were scarcely able to keep up her spirits: two or three times the trembling heart of Laura was ready to break through all restraint, avow her sad forebodings, and beg that this frightful marriage might be postponed for ever. She was prevented by the satisfaction she perceived it gave her mother, and by the thoughts of the light in which such fickle and childish conduct must put her in the opinion of others.

The marriage ceremony was performed privately, and Zeluco remained that night at the house of Madame de Seidlits.

CHAPTER LV.

All classic learning lose on classic ground. POPE.

A DAY or two before Laura's marriage took place at Naples, Signora Sporza received a letter from Germany, giving her an account of the severe loss which Madame de Seidlits would sustain by the bankruptcy. This letter directed to her at Naples, had gone in course of post to that city, was there detained for some days by the neglect of her servant, and now conveyed to her the first account she had ever had of an event which gave her very great pain. She well knew the limited boundaries of Madame de Seidlits's finances; that the money which she depended on for paying some pressing debts at Naples was in this banker's hands, and of course that she would be put to immediate and very great distress by this unlucky accident; she became even afraid, lest, terrified by a species of calamity which she had never experienced, Madame de Seidlits should become more urgent than ever with Laura to give her hand to Zeluco, and lest Laura, in compliance with her mother's desire, might at last consent: but what made her more uneasy than all the rest, was her not having it in her power from any fund of her own sufficiently to relieve the distress of her friends.

In this situation she could think of nobody so able, and whom she expected to find so willing, to supply her in what she wanted, as the honourable Mr. N——. She sent a message, desiring that he would come and speak with her as soon as possible. Mr. N—— was not at home. She sent again, begging that he would come to her the moment he arrived.

But her impatience increasing as the time of the departure of the post for Naples drew near, she drove to Mr. N——'s lodging, and calling for Buchanan, told him she had business of importance with his master, and would wait for him till he came home. Buchanan shewed her into a room adjoining to Mr. Steele's dressing-room, and

separated from it by a very crazy partition. Steele was there with Mr. Squander and some other young Englishmen. Signora Sporza hearing their voices, thought she distinguished that of Mr. N——. 'No,' said Buchanan, 'it is a party of young gentlemen, who are taking a course of Roman antiquities; they wait at present for the antiquarian who instructs them; but it is my opinion, if the poor man profit no more by *them*, than they do by his lectures, he will soon be in a state of perfect starvation.

A voice was then heard, crying, 'Hey, Duchess, what the devil are you about, you slut?—ay, to her Pincher; pull away;—tear it from her, boy.'

'Who does he talk to?' said Signora Sporza.

'A couple of quadrupeds, madam,' replied Buchanan; 'the one is a spaniel, the other a terrier. Those young gentlemen cannot proceed in their studies without them.'

Here the door of Mr. Steele's room was opened by a servant, who said the antiquarian had sent to know whether they were inclined to go to the Pantheon that day, or to St. Peter's?

'Damn the Pantheon and St. Peter's both,' cried Squander; 'tell him we can go to neither at present.—Zounds! cannot the fellow quietly pocket his money without *boring* us any more with his temples, and churches, and pictures, and statues?'

Steele, however, finding them determined against attending the antiquarian, followed the servant, and delivered a more civil message.

While he was absent, Squander, tossing a couple of maps on the floor, cried, 'Here, Duchess, here is *Roma Moderna*;—and there, Pincher—there is *Roma Antiqua* for you, boy—tear away.'

When Steele returned, he endeavoured to save Rome from the ravages of those Goths, but Squander told him with a loud laugh, that Duchess had made a violent rent in Saint Peter's, and Pincher had torn the Pantheon to pieces.

Squander then proposed that they should walk to the

stable, to examine a mare which he had thoughts of purchasing—Duchess and Pincher followed them, and Mr. N—— came home soon after.

'I have an unexpected call for money,' said Signora Sporza, interrupting his apologies for having made her wait, 'I hope you can let me have it.'

'I hope I can,' said Mr. N——. 'How much do you need?'

'Three or four hundred ounces,' replied she.

'I am happy that I can, without inconveniency, spare you four hundred,' replied he.

'I do not think it probable that you will be soon repaid,' said she.

'I shall not need it,' replied Mr. N——.

'You are an angel of a man,' cried she, 'give me then an order on my banker at Naples for that sum, for I must send it thither by this day's post.'

Mr. N—— directly gave her the order.

'O my good friend!' cried she, 'I must not tell you how I come to need this money; but, indeed, it would grieve you if you knew who—.' Here Signora Sporza's voice was suppressed with grief at the idea of the distress of her two friends, and the tears fell down her cheeks; after a pause, she gave her hand to Mr. N——, who led her to her carriage, without either of them uttering another word.

As soon as Signora Sporza got home, she wrote a most affectionate letter to Madame de Seidlits, complaining of her having concealed the misfortune of the bankruptcy at Berlin, and the distress in which this accident must necessarily have involved her and Laura; and informing her, that she herself had unexpectedly recovered some money for which she had no immediate use; she begged therefore very earnestly, that Madame de Seidlits would accept of five hundred ounces, which she could without any inconveniency let her have directly. Signora Sporza added one hundred ounces, all in her power, to the four hundred advanced by Mr. N——,

Madame de Seidlits was with her daughter when she received this letter, which she immediately shewed to Laura; they were both much affected with this instance of friendship, and agreed that it would have an air of unkindness not immediately to acquaint Signora Sporza with Laura's marriage, by which she would understand that her liberality was unnecessary.

Zeluco not having now the same objection that he had formerly, assented without difficulty to their proposal; and by the next post Signora Sporza received the accounts of Laura's marriage with equal surprise and concern.

The following day she informed Mr. N——, 'That she should always consider herself under as great an obligation to him, as if she had made use of his credit, but that she now found she would have no occasion for it, and desired him to instruct his banker at Naples to that effect.'

At the interval of several hours, she informed him of Laura's marriage with Zeluco. 'Good heavens,' exclaimed he, 'is it possible!'

'What do you see extraordinary,' said she, 'in a very accomplished woman of no fortune marrying a very rich man.'

'Of no accomplishments,' said Mr. N——.

'Even if that be the case, it certainly is nothing extraordinary,' said Signora Sporza. 'If it is not to be wondered at, I fear it is to be regretted,' added Mr. N——.

After this, Signora Sporza seemed desirous to change the subject. She would have had no scruple in acquainting Mr. N—— with any thing which regarded herself alone, but thought she had no right to inform him of the state of Madame de Seidlits's circumstances, and of course impressing him with the idea that this had driven Laura to the marriage. Signora Sporza was also much afraid that Laura, in avoiding one species of distress, had exposed herself to others, which to one of her turn of mind might prove fully as acute; and therefore she did not like to talk on the subject. Mr. N—— seeing her thoughtful and rather reserved, left her, he himself having been

ıt shocked as well as surprised at hearing of Lau-
riage.

:ever uneasiness that event occasioned to Signora
ınd Mr. N——, it was heard of with much satis-
ɔy his valet Buchanan, who lost no time in com-
ing the news to the baronet, who also heard of it
:asure; for although he did not think there was
ı danger as Buchanan did, of Mr. N——'s mak-
ɔosals of marriage to Laura immediately; yet he
perceived that he had a very high regard for that
ıd he particularly remarked, that his nephew did
ıll relish a proposal which had been made by way
ding him, that he should accompany his uncle to
d, without returning to Naples: in short, he
:, that although Mr. N—— might be sensible of
ɔnveniences of uniting himself to a woman of Lau-
gion and country, yet these inconveniences would
ly dwindle in his estimation, in proportion as his
:ion of the lady increased. He therefore could
p being pleased with the account of Laura's mar-

baronet observed that Mr. N—— was by no means
ısual spirits after this intelligence; he therefore o-
nothing that he imagined could tend to the amuse-
f his young friend, and frequently proposed excur-
ɔ Tivoli, Frescati, and other places in the neigh-
od of Rome.

Steele was generally of these parties; but one day,
he knight and Mr. N—— had agreed to dine at
ı, Mr. Steele was prevailed on to stay and make
a cricket match with some British gentlemen and
ɔotmen, who were at that time at Rome.

r dinner, the baronet asked Mr. N——, how he
he new acquaintance whom his father and aunt had
nended to him, meaning Mr. Steele.

ı impossible not to like him, replied N——, for he
of the best-natured easy-tempered fellows alive, and
same time of the greatest integrity. When he first

arrived at Naples, he seemed thoughtful and rather melancholy. This, however, being no part of his natural disposition, soon wore away, and now the genuine cheerful and obliging colour of his character is almost always predominant.

'Does he intend to remain long in Italy?' said the baronet.

'I believe he will remain as long as I do,' replied N——, 'and no longer, for he does me the honour of being more attached to me than to Italy; and I for my part have the most perfect good-will to him, although he is not precisely the kind of man whom I should have expected my father to recommend to my particular acquaintance; yet I shall ever think myself obliged to him for it.' 'I do not so much as know of what family he is,' continued Mr. N——, 'nor by what means he got acquainted with ours, for Steele is not spontaneously communicative; and you know, sir, I am not a great asker of questions.'

'I can give you some account of those matters,' said the baronet, 'for I have frequently heard your father describe his first interview with this young man's uncle.'

But as we know more of Mr. Steele's family than the baronet did, we shall in the next chapter give the reader a more circumstantial account than was in his power.

CHAPTER LVI.

Anecdotes concerning Mr. Nathaniel Transfer.

Mr. Nathaniel Transfer, uncle to the young man now in question, had made a large fortune in the city of London, where he was born, and where he lived happily till the age of sixty-five. Mr. Transfer's life may surely be called happy, since it afforded him the only enjoyments which he was capable of relishing; he had the pleasure of finding his fortune increasing every year; he had a remarkably good appetite, relished a bottle of old port, and slept very soundly all night, particularly after a bottle of

Burton ale. He might have continued some years longer in the same state of felicity, and perhaps have been conveyed to the other world in a gentle lethargy, without sickness, like a passenger who sleeps the whole way from Dover to Calais, had it not been for the importunities of a set of people who called themselves his friends; these officious persons were continually disturbing his tranquillity with such speeches as the following.—'Why should you, Mr. Transfer, continue to live all your life in the city, and follow the drudgery of business like a poor man who has his fortune to make? It is surely time for you to begin and enjoy a little ease and pleasure after so much toil and labour. What benefit will accrue to you from your great fortune, if you are determined never to enjoy it? Good God, Mr. Transfer, do you intend to slave for ever?—You certainly have already more money than you have any use for.'

This last assertion was unquestionably true, although the inference those reasoners drew from it was false. The fourth part of his fortune was a great deal more than Transfer had any use for; gathering of pebbles, or accumulating pounds, would have been equally beneficial to him, if he could have taken an equal interest in the one occupation as in the other, and if he could have contemplated the one heap with equal satisfaction with the other. He had not the shadow of a wish to spend more than he did, nor the least desire of benefiting any of the human race by the fruits of his labour. But Mr. Transfer's advisers had forgot the power of habit upon the mind of man. Transfer, like thousands of others, had begun to accumulate money as the means of enjoying pleasure at some future time; and continued the practice so long, that the means became the end—the mere habit of accumulating, and the routine of business, secured him from tedium, and became the greatest enjoyment of which he was susceptible. Not being aware of this himself, poor Transfer at last yielded to his friends' importunity. 'Well, I am determined to be a slave no longer; it does

not signify talking,' says he, 'I will begin and *enjoy* without any more loss of time.'

He wound up his affairs with all possible expedition, gave up all connexions in business at once, bought an estate in the country, with a very convenient house in good repair upon it, to which he went soon after, determined to rest from his labours, and to take his fill of pleasure. But he quickly found rest the most laborious thing that he had ever experienced, and that to have nothing to do, was the most fatiguing business on earth. In the course of business, his occupations followed each other at stated times, and in regular succession; the hours passed imperceptibly without seeming tedious, or requiring any effort on his part to make them move faster. But now he felt them to move heavily and sluggishly, and while he yawned along his serpentine walks and fringed parterres, he thought the day would never have an end.

His house was at too great a distance from London for his city friends to go down on a Saturday, and return to town on Monday. His neighbours in the country were ignorant of that circle of ideas which had rolled in his brain with little variation for the last forty years of his life; and he was equally unacquainted with the objects of their contemplations: unless it was their mutual love of port-wine and Burton ale, they had hardly a sentiment in common with Mr. Transfer, who was left for many a tedious hour, particularly before dinner, to enjoy rural felicity by himself, or with no other company than a few gods and goddesses which he had bought in Piccadilly, and placed in his garden. 'They talk,' said he to himself, 'of the pleasures of the country, but would to God I had never been persuaded to leave the labours of the city for such woeful pleasures. O Lombard Street! Lombard Street! in evil hour did I forsake thee for verdant walks and flowery landscapes and that there tiresome piece of made water. What walk is so agreeable as a walk through the streets of London? what landscape more flowery than those in the print-shops? and what water was ever made

by man equal to the Thames? If here I venture to walk but a short way beyond my own fields, I may be wet through by a sudden shower, and exposed to the wind of every quarter, before I get under shelter; but in walking through the streets of London, if it rains, a man can shelter himself under the piazzas; if the wind is in his face while he walks along one street, he may turn into another; if he is hungry, he can be refreshed at the pastry shops; if tired, he can call a hackney coach; and he is sure of meeting with entertaining company every evening at the club.'

Such were Mr. Transfer's daily reflections, and he was often tempted to abandon the country for ever, to return to Lombard-street, and re-assume his old occupations.

It is probable that he would have yielded to the temptation, had it not been for an acquaintance which he accidently formed with the earl of ———.

This nobleman, who was very subject to the gout, lived almost constantly in the country. What contributed with his bad health to give him a dislike to the town, was his fixed disapprobation of the public measures at that time carried on, and his indignation at the conduct of his eldest son, who had accepted of a place at court, and voted with administration.

The earl resided therefore ten months in the year at a very noble mansion in the middle of his estate, and at no great distance from the house which Transfer had lately purchased. After the death of the countess, his sister Lady Elizabeth, a maiden lady of an excellent character, always presided at his table, with whom Miss Warren, the daughter of a navy officer, who had lost his life in the service, resided as a friend and companion.

The earl had often heard of a rich citizen who had bought an estate in his neighbourhood, and the whole country resounded with the style in which he had ornamented his garden, and the peculiar charms of a little snug rotunda which he had just finished on the verge of his ground, and which impended the great London road.

As Mr. Transfer sat one day in this gay fabric, smoking his pipe, and enjoying the dust, the earl passed in his carriage, which, without having observed Mr. Transfer, he ordered to stop, that he might survey the new erection at leisure. The citizen directly popped his head out at the window, and politely invited his lordship to enter, and he would shew him not only that room, but also the other improvements he had made in his gardens.

My lord accepted the invitation, and was conducted by Mr. Transfer over all this scene of taste. The marks of astonishment which the former displayed at almost every thing he beheld, afforded great satisfaction to Mr. Transfer, the turn of whose conversation, and the singular observations he made, equally delighted his lordship.

'Pray, Mr. Transfer,' said he, pointing to one of the statues which stood at the end of the walk, 'what figure is that?'

'That, my lord,' answered Transfer, 'that there statue I take to be—let me recollect—yes, I take that to be either Venus or Vulcan, but upon my word, I cannot exactly tell which.—Here you, James,'—calling to the gardener; 'is this Venus or Vulcan?'

'That is Wenus,' answered the man; 'Wulcan is lame of a leg, and stands upon one foot in the next alley.'

'Yes, yes; this is Venus, sure enough,' said Transfer, 'though I was not quite certain at first.'

'Perhaps it is not an easy matter to distinguish them,' said the earl.

'Why, they are both made of the same metal, my lord,' said Transfer.'

'She ought to be bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh,' resumed the earl, 'for you know Venus was Vulcan's wife,' Mr. Transfer.'

'I am bound to believe she was,' replied Transfer, 'since your lordship says so.'

'You have so many of these gods, Mr. Transfer,' said the earl, 'that it is difficult to be master of all their private histories.'

so, my lord,' said Transfer, 'I was a good while
g their names,—but I know them all pretty well
at there man, in the highland garb, is Mars.
ame of the old fellow with the pitchfork is Nep-

re now very perfect indeed Mr. Transfer,' said

departure, my lord invited Mr. Transfer to dine
the following day, introduced him to his sister,
o entertained with his conversation and manners;
sited him frequently, and often invited him to
use, where an apartment was kept for him, to
was made welcome as often as he found himself
is own home, which, to the earl's great satisfac-
pretty frequently.
en at N—— house, Mr. Transfer sometimes had
o regret Lombard-street, particularly in the fore-
d when the weather was bad.
y, immediately after breakfast, when there was
ny but Mr. Transfer—'It rains so furiously,'
arl, 'that there is no driving out.—How shall
ourselves, Mr. Transfer?'
, I should think smoking a pipe or two the pleas-
y of passing the time in such raw moist weather,'
sfer.
that might do pretty well for you and me,' said
'but as far as I recollect, neither my sister, nor
g lady ever smoke.'
at is the case,' replied Transfer, 'we must think
ing else more to their taste, for I scorn not to
ble to the ladies.'
you got any thing new to read to us, sister?'
eer.
might do for you and me, brother,' said she;
haps Mr. Transfer never reads.'
ive me, madam,' said Transfer, 'I have no par-
ersion to it. I have sometimes read for half an
stretch since I have been settled in the country,

and I believe I could hold out longer, if I were not so apt to fall asleep.'

Sometime after this, Lady Elizabeth expressed her surprise to Mr. Transfer, that as he was a bachelor, he did not think of having some of his female relations to take care of his family rather than a mercenary housekeeper.

To this Mr. Transfer replied, that he had been put very early to business, and not being accustomed to his relations, he had never cared much for any of them, except his sister, who had lived with him several years in Lombard-street; and as he was then *accustomed to her*, he had a good deal of kindness for her, but that she had made an ungrateful return for all his kindness.

'I am sorry for that,' said Lady Elizabeth, 'but I hope your sister did nothing very bad.'

'Yes, but she did,' resumed Transfer; 'for she actually married, without my approbation, a young man of the name of Steele, with little fortune, and no experience in business, although she knew that I had a very *warm* man of established credit in my eye for her, provided she would only have had a little patience.'

'Provided she had liked the man you had in your eye, and provided he had liked her, you mean, Mr. Transfer,' said Lady Elizabeth.

'I beg your ladyship's forgiveness,' said Transfer; 'still she would have stood in need of a little patience.'

'Could not they have married when they pleased, if they were both willing, and you desirous of the match?' added she.

'I was most desirous of the match,' replied Transfer; 'but still there was an obstacle.'

'What obstacle?' said she.

'The man I had in my eye for my sister had a wife then alive,' answered Transfer.

'I confess that *was* an obstacle!' cried Lady Elizabeth.

'But she was dying of a consumption,' added Transfer,

'and I had reason to believe that he would propose marriage to my sister very soon after his wife's death.'

'Did his wife die as he expected?' said Lady Elizabeth.

'Yes; that she did,' said Transfer; 'but she might as well have lived, for my sister had secretly married the other three weeks before.'

'That was unlucky indeed. But what became of your sister and her husband?'

'I never saw my sister from the time of her marriage,' said Transfer, 'till after her husband became a bankrupt; for he broke within a very few years.'

'Poor man!' cried Lady Elizabeth; 'but you saw your sister after her misfortune?'

'Yes; I could not help it,' said Transfer, 'for she burst in upon me, begging that I would engage my credit for re-establishing her husband.'

'Which I hope you did,' said Lady Elizabeth.

'As I had refused to have any connection with him, even when he was in some credit, your ladyship can hardly suppose that I would begin one after he was quite broken,' said Transfer.

As Lady Elizabeth was a little shocked at this observation, she made no reply. It was not in her power to say any thing obliging on this occasion, and it was not in her nature to say any thing harsh:—she only was silent; which the earl, who was present, observing, 'To be sure, Mr. Transfer,' said he, 'that is not to be supposed.'

'But yet,' resumed Transfer, 'as she was my sister, I told her that if she would give up all connection with her husband, I was willing to receive her again into my house, and put her child out to nurse at my own expense.'

'That was very fair on your part,' said the earl: 'Well, what reply did your sister make to this?'

'Why, she absolutely refused, my lord; which is a pretty clear proof,' continued Mr. Transfer, 'of her loving her husband, though he was a bankrupt, better than her own brother, of whom there was not the least suspicion to his

discredit; for which reason I turned her away, refusing positively to do any thing for her husband.'

'Well, what became of them?' said the peer.

'I heard afterwards that they were reduced to great distress.—But what are bankrupts to expect?' continued Transfer; 'and as for my sister, she was not to be pitied, because she might have lived perfectly easy both in body and mind in my house in Lombard-street, if she had taken my advice, and abandoned her husband, and sent her child to nurse, or to board in the country.'

'Nothing can be more clear,' said the earl, 'than that you have acted like yourself, and have done every thing for your sister that could be expected of you.—But after all, what became of her?'

'A relation of her husband's happened to die, and left him a small estate in Yorkshire, of five or six hundred a-year; and as neither he, nor my sister, had any *ambition*, and were afraid of a new bankruptcy if they had settled in town; he retired to his small estate, where he died a few years ago, leaving no other children but the son whom she refused to send out to nurse, and who has now arrived at man's estate.'

'Whereas,' added the earl, 'if she had followed your advice, and given him out to nurse, she might probably have had him off her hands long ago.'

'Why, there is no knowing what might have happened,' said Transfer, 'for most of those children die before they arrive at the years of discretion, which is very well ordered, as they have nothing to live on.'

'Well, but Mr. Transfer,' resumed the peer, 'do *you* ever intend to marry?'

'No, my lord,' replied he; 'I cannot say I do;—as I never was *accustomed to a wife*, I am not much inclined to matrimony; for through the whole course of my life I have never found any thing agree with me, but what I am accustomed to.'

'That is very wisely observed,' said the earl; 'but this young man of course will be your heir?'

'Unquestionably,' answered Transfer; 'the young man never offended me; and as he is my nearest of kin, I should be sorry to do an unjust thing, and leave my fortune to any other body.—No, no; he shall have all at my death, but he must wait till then; besides, it is so far lucky that it saves my making a will, to which I have always had an aversion; for this young man being my lawful heir, there is no need to employ an attorney to leave him his due.'

CHAPTER LVII.

Reasons for going into Holy Orders.

Gaudet equis, canibusque. HOR.

THE strange apathy which Transfer discovered, and which shocked Lady Elizabeth, seemed to be a source of amusement to her brother; who, however, was surprised at perceiving that Transfer expressed not the least desire of ever seeing an only sister, and still more that he should have the same indifference towards a nephew whom he considered as his heir, and who he owned had never offended him. The insensibility of Transfer for his sister and nephew seemed to inspire the earl with an interest in them. He wrote to an acquaintance, who resided in that part of the country in which Mrs. Steele and her son lived, desiring an account of both their characters, and a particular detail regarding their circumstances and manner of life, especially what the views of the son were.

In consequence of this, the earl was informed, that Mrs. Steele was an agreeable woman, of a cheerful temper and benevolent disposition, without much foresight, and distractedly fond of her son, whom she had never been able to contradict in her life: that he was a young fellow of that genuine and rare good-nature that resists the usual effect of so much indulgence; for, although his mother's study was to gratify, not to correct his humours, this ill-judged partiality had only prevented his improve-

ment, without rendering him capricious, unfeeling, or wicked: that while he remained at school, he had applied himself to nothing; but that ever since he left it, he had applied himself with unremitting diligence to hunting and shooting, in both of which, and in the knowledge of horses and dogs, he had made great proficiency for his age; that he was made welcome wherever he went, and was a great favourite with man, woman, and child, all over the country; and that a noble lord, of very great influence, who was particularly fond of him, had lately told young Steele, that he would be very happy to have it in his power to be of service to him; adding, 'that if he chose to go into the army, he would immediately procure him a cornetcy of dragoons, and would do all in his power to assist his promotion afterwards.'

Steele, after expressing his gratitude for so much goodness, declined the proposal, saying, he was quite unfit for the army.

The nobleman was the more surprised at this, as he had a notion that the army was the profession, of all others, for which Mr. Steele was fittest, being genteel in his person, of a bold intrepid disposition, and capable of bearing the greatest bodily fatigue.

'You may, perhaps, have no inclination for the service,' said his lordship.—'But—'

'Nay, my lord,' resumed Mr. Steele, 'if there were any likelihood of a war, I should prefer it to any other line of life; because, in the time of war, a soldier is continually occupied, and can have no wish but doing his duty—but then what a sad business must it be in the time of peace?'

'During a successful war,' said my lord, 'a soldier will naturally be in high spirits; but I do not perceive why he should be peculiarly sad in the time of peace.'

'*I* certainly should, my lord,' said Steele; 'your lordship knows my excessive fondness for shooting, and the chase;—to be obliged to attend my regiment during those seasons would render me quite miserable.'

'Why, the same objection,' said his lordship, 'may be made to law, physic, and almost every other profession.'

'It may be so,' replied Steele.

'Then you wish to be of no profession,' said the peer.

'Forgive me, my lord,' said the other, 'I am sensible that my circumstances are so narrow, that I cannot hope to indulge my taste for my favourite amusements in the style I could wish, without being assisted by the emoluments of some profession.'

'What profession then would you choose to be of?' rejoined his lordship.

'That of a clergyman,' replied Mr. Steele.

'A clergyman!' exclaimed the peer.

'Yes, my lord,' continued Steele; 'I confess I have a great desire to enter into holy orders.'

'I cannot conceive,' said the peer, 'what can be your inducement.'

'My fondness for hunting and shooting,' answered Steele; 'and if, by your lordship's favour, I could obtain a tolerable living in a hunting county, I should think myself extremely happy. The business of a clergyman, as your lordship knows, from many examples, is no way incompatible with a passion for those manly amusements, without which I am sure life would seem a very dull affair in my eyes.'

'But there are certain duties of a clergyman,' said the peer, 'which, in some people's eyes, are not exceedingly entertaining.'

'I should think them no great hardships, my lord,' said Steele: 'In case of the indisposition of my curate, on particular occasions, I have no manner of objection to reading prayers, or to preaching: and on the whole I do not despair of rendering myself agreeable to the generality of my flock; for, with regard to comforting the sick and relieving the poor, I thank heaven I am disposed to perform those duties whether I should ever be a clergyman or not.'

'All this is very well,' resumed the peer; 'but, my dear Steele, are not there some previous studies necessary before you can be—'

'Certainly;' replied the other, interrupting his lordship; 'and I have of late been preparing myself accordingly. I confess I was too inattentive at school, which renders this task the harder upon me now; yet I hope to surmount all obstacles, and give satisfaction to the bishop. My passion for hunting and shooting instigate me to exertions in study which I never knew before.'

'Nay, heaven forefend,' replied the peer, smiling, 'that I should attempt to blunt such laudable instigations. All I have to say is, that when you are once fairly ordained, I beg you will let me know; there is some considerable chance of a living, which is in my gift, being vacant very soon, and you may rely upon it, my dear Steele, that if you continue in your present way of thinking, and are completely dubbed, I will prefer no man to yourself.'

CHAPTER LVIII.

Ille bonis faveatque, et conciliatur amicis. Hor.

THIS account of Mrs. Steele and her son did not diminish the inclination the earl had to serve them, in which he was assisted by Lady Elizabeth. They found no difficulty in prevailing on Mr. Transfer to give Steele an invitation to visit him, with which the young man immediately complied. His appearance, natural complaisance, and everlasting good-humour, rendered him highly agreeable to all the family at N—— house, without excepting Miss Warren, the young lady who lived with Lady Elizabeth. Here it will not be improper to mention by what accident this young lady came to be introduced into the family of the earl of ————.

Lady Elizabeth happened to pass through the county town at a time when the inhabitants, by ringing of bells,

bonfires, and illuminations, were announcing their joy for a victory obtained by a celebrated naval commander, She stopped her carriage at the door of an old female acquaintance, intending merely to leave a message; but understanding that she was a little indisposed, Lady Elizabeth went to see her: As she entered the chamber, a beautiful girl of about thirteen or fourteen years of age, with severe marks of sorrow, went out. After Lady Elizabeth had satisfied herself that her friend's indisposition was but slight, and that she was in a way of recovery, she inquired who that lovely girl was who had just left the room, and why she seemed so much afflicted.

'Alas, poor girl,' replied the other, 'she has received the account of her father's being killed in the very action for which the citizens are displaying all those marks of joy. Unfortunate girl,' continued she, 'by her father's death, she is not only deprived of her only surviving parent, but perhaps of the very means of subsistence; for there is great reason to fear that her father, who was a very generous as well as a brave man, has left more debts than effects.'

'Poor young creature,' said Lady Elizabeth, 'how much is she to be pitied—how came you acquainted with her?'

'I am a distant relation of her mother's,' replied Lady Elizabeth's friend; 'on hearing of her father's death, I invited her to my house, that I might sooth her affliction, and prevent her being shocked at seeing her young companions, unmindful of her particular calamity, take part in the general joy.'

The humane and benevolent heart of Lady Elizabeth was strongly affected at this recital: she continued for some time in silent contemplation on the hard lot of this unhappy orphan, whose tender bosom was wounded by one of the sharpest arrows in the whole quiver of adversity, at a time when the hearts of all around her were elated with joy.

She desired that the young lady might be introduced

to her; she spoke to her the soothing language of sympathy; and was charmed with her appearance, her conversation, and the whole of her behaviour.

Lady Elizabeth afterwards made an application to this young lady's nearest relations, proposing to take on herself the charge of her maintenance and education, to which they agreed with the most ready acquiescence. She carried her to N—— house; the earl, who had known Miss Warren's father a little, and had a high esteem for his character, was delighted with what his sister proposed, and Miss Warren gained daily upon the affections of both, and was now the confidential friend and inseparable companion of her patroness.

We now return to Mr. Transfer, who became in a short time *accustomed* to his nephew, and at length so fond of him, that he could hardly bear his absence for a few hours.

Not all the interest which Steele had in pleasing Mr. Transfer, however, nor even the more powerful attractions of Miss Warren, could prevail on this young man to remain at his uncle's house, after he received a letter from his mother, written in rather low spirits, and expressing a desire to see him.

He assured his uncle, in spite of his solicitations to the contrary, that he would set out for Yorkshire the very next morning. Transfer complained of this to the earl, saying,—'It was strange perverseness in the young man to prefer his mother's company, who could do nothing for him, to his, who intended to do so much.'

'The general run of people would certainly act otherwise,' replied the earl; 'but why cannot Mr. Steele have the pleasure both of your company and his mother's? for although she ought not to be put on an equal footing with a man of your *great wealth*, Mr. Transfer, yet the affection the young man shews to his mother is no way unnatural neither.'

'I do not assert that it is,' said Transfer; 'but what would your lordship have me to do, for I do not love to

part with this youth, after having become *accustomed to him;* and perhaps his mother may not allow him to return so soon as I could wish.'

'Invite his mother to come with him,' replied the earl, 'and then he'll stay as long as you please.'

This was an expedient which had never entered into Transfer's mind; but he agreed to it the moment it was proposed. He wrote to his sister to detain her son as short a time as possible, and begged of her to accompany him to his house. Lady Elizabeth wrote also to Mrs. Steele, expressing a desire to be acquainted with her, and urging her to forget old misunderstandings, and accept without delay of her brother's invitation.

Mrs. Steele came accordingly with her son, and was received by her brother with some appearance of kindness, while to her son he displayed as much as was in his nature to discover. The following day she was visited by the family at N—— house; was invited there, and treated in the most obliging manner: she had not resided a couple of months with Mr. Transfer, till he entirely forgot Lombard-street, and felt less desire of forsaking his own mansion for that of the earl; and at last, being again accustomed to his sister, and she bestowing more attention to amuse him, he became fonder of her company than even of her son's, who, it must be confessed, began to have a greater desire for Miss Warren's company, than for that of either his uncle or mother.

This was a happiness he never enjoyed, however, but in the presence of Lady Elizabeth, to whom his partiality for her young friend was very evident.

The earl took occasion one day when he found himself alone with Transfer, to mention young Steele's fancy for being a clergyman.

'That is a business,' said Transfer, 'which there is very little to be made of. I have no notion of purchasing in a lottery where there are so many blanks and so few prizes, my lord.'

'Would you not be happy to see your nephew a bishop?' said the earl.

'I should be much happier to see him an independent gentleman,' replied Transfer.

'You may enjoy that happiness when you please,' said the earl; 'for it is in your power to make him so without injuring yourself, or any person on earth.'

This led to a long conversation, in which his lordship, with less difficulty than he expected, convinced Mr. Transfer, that nothing would do him so much honour, or contribute more to his own happiness, than executing what had been thus accidentally hinted. Mrs. Steele and her son had by their cheerful attention gained the citizen's heart so completely, as almost to alter his nature; he had no enjoyment with which they were not intimately connected; and when the earl told him, that by giving Steele a genteel independence, he would add the generous ties of gratitude and esteem to those of blood by which the young man was already bound to him, the citizen became impatient till the deed was drawn out, which, to the astonishment of Mrs. Steele and her son, was presented to him as soon as executed.

CHAPTER LIX.

Neglected, Tray and Pointer lie;
And covies unmolested fly. PRIOR.

In the meanwhile, the shooting season passed away without Mr. Steele shewing any desire of profiting by it; his growing passion for Miss Warren entirely occupied his mind. He long watched, in vain, for a proper opportunity of declaring his sentiments to her, and when the long-expected opportunity occurred, the timidity which always attends sincere and respectful love, prevented him from seizing it. But the affable and obliging character of Lady Elizabeth encouraged him to mention to *her* those

sentiments which he had been unable to express to the young lady herself.

Lady Elizabeth's answer implied that he ought to attempt no engagement of such a nature, without the approbation of his mother and uncle.

He said, he was certain of the former, but deferred speaking to his uncle till he had some reason to hope that his proposals were not disagreeable to Miss Warren.

Lady Elizabeth consented to sound her young friend on the subject, but she first informed her brother.

'I am rejoiced to hear this,' said the earl; 'for Transfer and his sister seem both fond of her, and I dare say will be pleased with the proposal: Steele is so very good-humoured a young fellow, that I am convinced he will make the sweet girl happy; and in her he will have one of the best wives in England. But how is she inclined herself?'

'That is what I am not quite certain of,' replied Lady Elizabeth; 'but Mr. Steele's appearance and disposition must be powerful advocates in his favour.'

When Lady Elizabeth mentioned to Miss Warren what had passed between her and Mr Steele, the young lady, with some degree of solemnity and earnestness, begged to know whether her ladyship or the earl had any wish, or were at all interested in the answer she should give to Mr. Steele.

'None, my sweet friend,' said Lady Elizabeth; 'but that it should be dictated by your own genuine uninfluenced inclination.'

'The whole of your ever noble and generous behaviour ought to have left me no doubt of such an answer,' cried Miss Warren, as she kissed her ladyship's hand. 'I will now, as you desire, tell you my genuine sentiments. It is some time,' continued she, 'since I perceived Mr. Steele's partiality for me, and thought it not impossible that he might make this proposal. I have therefore had time to weigh the matter

fully. Mr. Steele is evidently of a cheerful and obliging disposition; he is agreeable in his person, and I doubt not possesses other good qualities: I know what his uncle has already done for him, and what there is a probability of his still doing; yet all those advantages do not tempt me from the happy asylum I have found at N—— house, for these six years past; and although I think myself obliged to Mr. Steele for his good opinion, I would rather remain the friend of Lady Elizabeth N——, than be the wife of Mr. Steele.'

'If the one were incompatible with the other, I am the last person in the world that would have proposed it,' said Lady Elizabeth.

'I would rather, if left to my own choice,' said Miss Warren, 'remain the one without being the other.'

Lady Elizabeth urged her friend no farther, but in the most soothing terms possible communicated her determination to Mr. Steele, whose whole behaviour was expressive then, and for some time afterwards, of the severity of his disappointment, and the permanency of his esteem for the lady.

The truth was, that Miss Warren, although her heart was disengaged, and although she thought favourably of Steele in some respects, yet being herself a young lady of a very accomplished mind, she perceived Mr. Steele's deficiency in certain parts of knowledge which she thought requisite for securing to a gentleman the esteem of the world.

The effect which her refusal had on Mr. Steele's spirits appeared in spite of his efforts to conceal it; he was teased and distressed by his uncle's inquiries into the cause of the alteration in his spirits; and finding no return of taste for his former amusements, he told the earl that he had a strong inclination to go abroad for a year, and begged of his lordship to endeavour to make his design palatable to Mr. Transfer.

The earl, to whom his sister had communicated Miss Warren's determination, approved very highly of Mr.

Steele's plan, not only as the most likely measure that could be adopted for dissipating that uneasiness and dejection which obscured the natural gaiety of his disposition, but also for the improvement of his mind, and enlarging the range of his ideas.

He represented therefore to Mr. Transfer, that his nephew's health was evidently on the decline, and that a short excursion to the continent was necessary for its re-establishment. After some struggle, the earl obtained Mr. Transfer's assent; Steele himself having by the same argument previously prevailed on his mother not only to abstain from any kind of opposition, but even to be solicitous for his speedy departure.

The earl's second son, the honourable Mr. N——, had some considerable time before this returned to Italy, partly from choice, but in some degree also on account of a complaint in his breast, and was to spend the ensuing winter at Naples. Mr. Steele had occasionally heard the earl read some parts of his letters, from which, as well as from his general character, he had formed a very high opinion of him, and had a great desire to be of his acquaintance. The earl therefore gave him a letter to his son, recommending him as a young gentleman in whose welfare he was greatly interested; and Lady Elizabeth wrote to her nephew in the same strain.

When Mr. Steele came to London, he accidentally met with an acquaintance going to Milan; they went together, stopping only one day at Paris, and that merely because the gentleman had some business to transact there, which when he had finished, he had the complaisance to tell Steele, that although he himself was perfectly well acquainted with Paris, and had no farther business in it, yet rather than lose the pleasure of his company to Milan, he would remain a week or two at Paris, that he might have an opportunity of viewing some of the curiosities of this celebrated capital before he went to Italy.

Steele thanked him, but begged that their journey might not be retarded an instant on his account. 'I

thought,' said his companion, 'I heard you say you never had been here before.'

'I never was,' said Steele.

'Would not you like then to take a view of the town before we go?' said the other.

'Why, faith,' replied Steele, 'I never had much pleasure in looking at towns; and as for this here, I am heartily tired of it already.'

They set out therefore directly for Milan, and the day after their arrival Steele meeting with an English footman, who had already made the tour of Italy, engaged him, and proceeded the following morning to Rome, where he slept one night, and next day he told his servant to order post-horses, that they might continue their journey to Naples.

'Good God,' cried the man, 'will not your honour stay one single day at Rome?'

''I have some thoughts of it,' said Steele, 'when I return.'

He arrived in good health at Naples, where he soon found Mr. N——, who, independent of the warm recommendations from his father and aunt, was in a short time so pleased with the careless good-humour and singularity of Steele's disposition, that he procured him an apartment in the house where he himself lodged; and they had lived together ever since.

The baronet could not give so particular a detail of Steele's family as has been now given; but he mentioned every circumstance relating to them that was known to himself—after which he and Mr. N—— returned from Albano to Rome, where they found Mr. Steele just returned to his lodgings from the cricket party.

And there we shall leave them, and return to Naples and to Laura.

CHAPTER LX.

gretter ce que l'on aime est un bien, en comparaison de vivre avec ce que l'on hait. LA BRUYERE.

ZELUCO was not long married before it was pretty generally known, notwithstanding the intention of keeping it r some time secret. The marriage, therefore, was publicly avowed, and Laura appeared in all the brilliancy of ess and equipage, which riches can procure, and the tentatious taste of her husband exacted. She was universally admired, and the acquaintance of her husband siduously courted by many who, previous to his marage, showed no great inclination to cultivate it.

Possessed of great riches, with the advantage of birth, d having obtained the woman he had long ardently dered, it is natural to imagine that Zeluco now enjoyed ppiness, or at least tranquillity; but any tolerable deee of tranquillity is incompatible with perfidy and fraud; sides, this wretched man possessed two qualities which ver mingle smoothly in the character of a husband; he s excessively jealous, and excessively vain of his wife's auty: a wiser man might have been excused for the tter, but the conduct and character of Laura left him ithout any rational pretext for the former. To drive ound the beauteous environs of Naples in the carriage ith her mother, to improve her mind by books, and to ivert it by music, from certain painful reflections which ten intruded themselves, in spite of all her endeavours, ere the sole amusements or occupations she was inclin-l to in the absence of her husband. When he was preent, which was by no means the most comfortable part f her time, substituting a sense of duty, all that was in er power, in the place of affection, which she could not ommand, she adapted her conversation and conduct, as uch as she could, to what she thought would please him: ut if there are tempers of such an unfortunate frame hat even when joined to goodness of disposition it is im-

possible to please, how then could the efforts of this unhappy young woman prove successful, who had to deal with a peevish temper engrafted on a vicious disposition?

Zeluco's vanity was continually inciting him to carry Laura to places of public resort; yet such was the capricious absurdity of the man, that he was at once desirous of displaying the beauty of his wife, and unable to bear the admiration which it always attracted. And when she was particularly accosted by those gentlemen whom he himself had introduced to her acquaintance, the commonest civility on her part, such as the laws of good manners render indispensable, filled him with chagrin, and seldom failed, for some hours, to throw an additional shade of ill-humour upon the habitual gloom of his temper: so that it was impossible for Laura to gratify his vanity without exciting his jealousy; and it is difficult to determine, even during the period in which his fondness was at the height, whether she afforded *him* more pain or pleasure, while it is certain that his behaviour, from the beginning, filled *her* with vexation and remorse.

An Italian of high rank, from a different part of Italy, happened at this time to come to Naples, where he lived at considerable expense, and in an ostentatious style; he was presented to Laura by Zeluco himself, soon after their marriage: peculiarly pleased with her conversation and behaviour, this nobleman addressed himself more to her than to any other woman, as often as he met her in public. This was remarked by Zeluco, and produced the usual effect on his temper.—Laura, conscious of no impropriety in thought or conduct, imputed her husband's ill-humour on this, as on other similar occasions, to an unfortunate habit of fretting without cause, and took notice of it in no other way than by redoubling her endeavours to please him. Zeluco himself, though he was unable to controul the sulkiness of his temper, was, for some time, ashamed to mention to her what occasioned, or rather what increased it, in the present instance. At length, however, he expressed some disapprobation of the attention which this nobleman paid her.

'I will most cheerfully abstain,' said Laura, 'from going to those places where I have any chance of meeting him.'

'How is that possible?' said Zeluco; 'he is at every public place.'

'I will go to no public place,' said Laura.

'That would seem very singular,' resumed he.

'The singularity is of small importance,' said she, 'provided you are satisfied.'

'No;' replied he, 'it would be improper for you not to go to those assemblies which all people of rank frequent; but you may behave in such a manner when you see him there, as will prevent his speaking to you any more.'

'In what manner is that?' said Laura.

'A woman who is displeased with a man's addresses, is never at a loss to find it out,' replied he.

'But I have not the least reason to be displeased with the manner in which this gentleman addresses me,' said she, 'yet, if you *have*, I certainly wish to converse with him no more.'

'Every woman who has no desire of pleasing a man,' resumed Zeluco, 'knows an easy way of breaking up all connection with him, without absenting herself from the places where there is a probability of meeting him.'

'Well,' replied Laura, endeavouring to smile, 'I am a woman quite ignorant of that easy way, yet assuredly I have no particular desire of pleasing the person in question.'

'I am not quite sure of that,' said he.

'How shall I prove it to you?' resumed Laura.

'By turning abruptly from him,' replied Zeluco, 'when he next speaks to you.'

'Would not that be rude,' replied Laura, 'to one of his rank, and whom you introduced to me?—but I am sure you say this only in jest.—Come, my way is the best,—let me avoid public places—at least till he leave Naples; it is but three weeks.'

'How came you to know so exactly,' said Zeluco, with an air of surprise, 'when he was to leave Naples?'

'By your informing me,' replied Laura.

'My informing you!' said he.

'Yes,' replied Laura; 'do you not remember that a few days ago you told my mother and me that he was to set out for Rome in less than a month?'

'The news seems to have made a strong impression on you,' said Zeluco, peevishly.

'Just enough to make me recollect it now, for the first time since you mentioned it,' replied Laura.

'Well, you will behave as you think proper,' said Zeluco, in a little better humour; 'but you cannot but understand his drift in the great attention he pays you.'

'I have seen nothing but politeness in his behaviour to me,' she replied; 'but the moment he discovers any drift that ought to be disagreeable to you, I shall certainly turn from him in the manner you desire.'

Zeluco withdrew, and Laura, with a sigh, exclaimed, 'Alas! my mother, had you known this man, the wealth of India could not have bought your consent to his being united to your poor unfortunate daughter.'—She then burst into a flood of tears; and having in this manner assuaged the anguish of her heart, she wiped her eyes, summoned all her firmness, and met her mother and husband at dinner with a serene and cheerful countenance.

CHAPTER LXI.

The Prisoners.

Some little time after this, Madame de Seidlits received a very unexpected letter from her son-in-law, dated from Rome, in which he acquainted her, that his friend Baron Carlostein and he were just arrived in that city, and intended soon to pay her a visit at Naples.

Baron Carlostein had long had a great inclination to visit Italy, and had received his sovereign's permission

for that purpose: While he was preparing for his journey, it occurred to him, that his friend Seidlits would probably be happy to have an opportunity of seeing his mother and sister, particularly the latter, of whose marriage he had lately heard. The baron, therefore, asked it as a particular favour of Captain Seidlits to accompany him; and on the captain's agreeing, the king's leave was obtained for him also; and the two friends set out together. Carlostein soon perceived that his companion had infinitely more impatience to be with Madame de Seidlits and Laura, than admiration of those masterpieces of art which detain the connoisseur and antiquarian in their travels through Italy. That Captain Seidlits therefore might pass as much as possible of the period for which he had leave of absence with his mother and sister, Carlostein had the complaisance to continue his course directly, and with great expedition, to Rome. After a hasty view of what is most remarkable in that city, he proposed to accompany his friend to Naples, remain some time there; and, on his return to Germany, travel all over Italy with that leisure and attention which the curiosities the country presents merit.

Captain Seidlits, in his letter to his mother-in-law, assured her that the banker's failure would not be attended with the bad consequences which were feared at first; and concluded by expressions of the warmest affection for his sister, with compliments to her husband, to whom, he added, he was impatient of being known, and prepared to esteem.

This letter was followed, within a few days, by one from Signora Sporza, informing Madame de Seidlits that Mr. N—— had met with the Baron Carlostein and Captain Seidlits at the Cardinal Bernis' assembly, and had presented those gentlemen to her. She dwelt a good deal on the praises of both; adding, that they were so much approved of by the Roman ladies, that she imagined they would find it difficult to leave Rome so soon as they intended: she concluded by warning Madame de Seidlits

and Laura not to be greatly surprised or disappointed if Captain Seidlits did not arrive at Naples so soon as he had appointed.

Baron Carlostein and his friend had been recommended in a distinguished manner to Cardinal de Bernis, who sent them an invitation to dinner some days after the date of Signora Sporza's letter above mentioned. At his very hospitable and magnificent board they met with the honourable Mr. N——, his uncle, Mr. Steele, and a variety of other strangers; it happened that there was at table one person, at least, from almost every country of Europe; the conversation turned a good deal on national character, and several lively traits were mentioned by way of illustration; but whether it was owing to a notion that the British bear strokes of this kind with less good-humour than the inhabitants of other countries, or whatever was the cause, it so happened, that for a considerable time no mention was made of any peculiar feature belonging to them.

At length the cardinal, addressing himself to Mr. N——, said, he could not help thinking, that the melancholy generally attributed to the English nation was greatly exaggerated. He mentioned many English gentlemen with whom he had the pleasure of being acquainted, who were as gay as any Frenchmen, without the levity of which his countrymen were so much accused; besides, continued he, politely, 'Can any thing be less probable, than that the nation, which perhaps of all others has the best reason to be cheerful, should be the most melancholy. In return to this, Mr. N—— observed, that what was the most probable, was not always the most true; that, in his opinion, nothing was so much to be envied as that charming quality which seemed inherent in the French nation, of supporting, without murmuring, and even with gaiety, many of those vexatious incidents in life which sink the people of other nations into despondency, or overwhelm them with despair; that, in his opinion, it is preposterous to call *that* quality of the mind

levity which does what philosophy often attempts in vain. As for the melancholy imputed to his countrymen, he was much afraid, that notwithstanding the particular exceptions which had come under his eminence's observation, it was but too well founded: and he illustrated his assertion by the following anecdote.—

'During a late war between France and Great Britain,' said Mr. N——, 'an English vessel of superior force took a French frigate after an obstinate engagement, in which the French officers displayed that intrepidity which is so natural to them. The frigate was brought into a commercial town upon the English coast, and the officers were treated with great hospitality by some of the principal inhabitants: one very rich merchant in particular invited them frequently to his house, where he entertained them in a very magnificent manner.—The first day on which they dined with him, his lady behaved with such peculiar attention to the prisoners, that she seemed to neglect all the other guests at her table. After the company had withdrawn, she spoke highly to her husband of the politeness and easy agreeable manners of the French nation, and added, that it gave her pleasure to perceive that the French gentlemen who had just left them, instead of giving way to vain repining, or allowing their spirits to be depressed by their misfortune, had shewn the utmost cheerfulness and gaiety during the whole repast, all except one gentleman, who seemed much dejected, and almost entirely overcome with the idea of being a prisoner. This she accounted for by supposing that his loss was greater than that of all the rest put together; and she apprehended, from the obstinate silence he had retained, and from the discontent and melancholy so strongly marked in his countenance, that the poor gentleman would not long survive his misfortune.

'I cannot imagine who you mean,' said the husband.

'The lady described the man so exactly, that it was impossible to mistake him.

'That unfortunate gentleman,' said the husband, 'is

none of the prisoners; he is the captain of the English vessel who took them.'

CHAPTER LXII.

Carlostein and Seidlits arrive at Naples.

All the allurements of Rome, however, could not overcome Captain Seidlits's impatient desire of seeing his relations at Naples; and the baron, yielding to his friend's eagerness, agreed to set out sooner than Signora Sporza had given Madame de Seidlits reason to expect.

Mr. N—— would have willingly accompanied them, provided he had been able to prevail on his uncle to go so far as Naples. But that gentleman had received some letters from England, which made him impatient to return directly; and all the fears which were suggested by Buchanan being now dissipated by the marriage of Zeluco to Laura, he rather wished his nephew to remain another season in Italy, as he had been advised, for the confirmation of his health.

Mr. N—— accompanied the baronet on his way home as far as Florence, and there took his leave of him and Mr. Steele, who had received letters from his mother and Mr. Transfer, pressing his immediate return in the most earnest terms. Steele, therefore, to the great satisfaction of the baronet, resolved to accompany him to England; and on the day they left Florence, Mr. N—— set out on his return to Naples, where Signora Sporza had arrived before him.

Carolstein and Seidlits had reached that city a considerable time before either. On the morning of their arrival, Zeluco had gone to the country with the nobleman whom he had accompanied from Sicily, and was not to return till the day after. Laura determined to pass that interval with her mother.

Madame de Seidlits was delighted with the thoughts of seeing her son-in-law, for whom she had always felt the

ncerest esteem and friendship; and Laura had more appiness in the expectation of passing some time with er brother, than in any reflection which had occupied er mind since her marriage. She likewise experienced confused sentiment of pleasure and uneasiness, the ource of which she did not clearly comprehend, in the lea of meeting Carolstein, who had struck her fancy so rongly in her youth that the impression had never since een entirely effaced.

Immediately after their arrival at Naples, Captain Seidts waited on his mother-in-law, with whom he found his ister. When the reciprocal congratulations and compliments were ended, Madame de Seidlits, inquiring what as become of his friend, was told, that he had insisted n remaining at the inn by himself for the first day of heir meeting at least, that he might be no bar to that domestic kind of conversation so natural among near relations after a long absence. 'I cannot bear the appearnce of your leaving your friend at an inn the moment ou arrive among your relations,' said Madame de Seidits: 'we shall have abundance of opportunities for domestic chat; so if you think the baron can put up with poor dinner, we had best send for him.' Captain leidlits, who had with reluctance left his friend to dine lone, heard this proposal with pleasure, saying, 'If that s the only objection, I shall certainly endeavour to bring im; for I never knew any man have a greater relish for ood company, and so much indifference for good fare.'

This proposal of her mother's was not heard with perect tranquillity by Laura; who foresaw that it would ead to their passing the whole evening together; and rom what she had remarked of her husband's temper, he feared that he might not be pleased when he came to now that instead of her having passed the time of his bsence with her mother only, a young gentleman besides er brother was of the party; she could not object howver without giving a reason to her mother, which she ished to conceal; nor could she, with propriety, with-

draw from a company of which her brother, so lately arrived, was one.

Captain Seidlits left them, and returned soon after with his friend.

The baron Carolstein was at that time on the borders of thirty years of age; he was active and genteel in his person; he had an open manly countenance, which announced candour and good sense; his conversation and conduct confirmed what his features indicated; his general manner was gentle; yet when provoked, which did not slightly happen, his fine blue eyes darted a fire very different from their usual expression.

When Captain Seidlits presented him to his sister as an old acquaintance, he was struck with admiration at the improvement which a few years had made in the graces of her face and person. Her, whom he recollected only as a lively girl, just bursting from childhood, he now beheld a woman in the full bloom of beauty, and formed by nature's finest symmetry. If he found the appearance of Laura more interesting on account of its alterations, she was the more pleased with his, because it remained the same.

After dinner Madame de Seidlits, renewing an old source of sportive dispute, said to her son-in-law, 'I hope your short stay at Rome was sufficient to convert you from your heretical opinions on the article of female beauty; and you will now confess that the fine expressive countenances of the Roman ladies are far more interesting than all the bloom of the Saxon.

Captain Seidlits, however, fought the cause of his countrywomen with an intrepidity worthy of a knight-errant. 'I will appeal to Baron Carolstein,' said Madame de Seidlits; 'his partiality for his country will not blind his judgment nor corrupt his candour—which do you think the finest style of countenance, that of the Italian or German women?'

'I prefer a mixture of both,' replied he, throwing the glance of an instant at Laura.

'*A vous ma sœur*,' said Captain Seidlits, who had accidentally taken up a guitar, the moment before he made this appeal to his sister.

Laura blushed at the import of the baron's answer, and was embarrassed by her brother's direct application of it; she extricated herself, however, by snatching her guitar out of his hand, saying, '*Volontiers mon frere*,' and instantly playing one of his favourite airs.

This turned the conversation; and Laura, who was a very great proficient in music, was desired to play several pieces on the harpsichord as well as guitar, which she accompanied with her voice in a manner that would have delighted a far less partial audience.

The evening was spent with entire satisfaction by Madame de Seidlits and the captain: Laura's enjoyment was blended with great inquietude: Carlostien hardly uttered a sentence, as his friend and he returned to their lodgings, where, pretending to be disposed to sleep, he retired immediately to his bedchamber, and passed the night meditating on the accomplishments of Laura.

Zeluco at his return received the two strangers with politeness, and many expressions of friendship; their appearance and manners attracted the approbation of all to whom they were presented. He perceived that his connection with them did himself credit, and therefore was unremitting in his attentions, and entertained them with a profusion of magnificence exceeding what he formerly displayed.

Some such motive of selfishness and vanity is the usual source of *ostentatious* entertainment; friendship and cordial good-will to the guests are satisfied with mere simple preparations for their comfort and conveniency.

As Mr. N—— lived in the greatest intimacy with Carlostein and Seidlits, and was highly respected by them, he was invited to all those splendid feasts which Zeluco's vanity prompted him to give for the entertainment of his brother-in-law and the baron. Zeluco was also assiduous in contriving parties of pleasure for their amusement; and

often accompanied them when they went to visit the environs of this very interesting city. He engaged a certain abbé of distinguished taste in virtù to attend them as their Ciceroné, and explain the antiquities brought from Herculaneum and Pompeia, and the other curiosities collected in the museum at Portici. Madam de Seidlits and her daughter were generally of those parties: but Captain Seidlits, as was already hinted, had not so great a relish for virtù as either his friend Carlostein or Mr. N——; nor was he enthusiastically struck with the various natural beauties which adorn the bay of Naples. Intended from his early youth for the profession of arms, his studies and reflections were pretty much confined to what related to the military art; and he was not solicitous of being thought a connoisseur in any other. Having honestly acknowledged that the bay of Naples was the most beautiful prospect he had ever seen, he was little disposed to say, and as little to hear, any more about it; and when the abbé began to descant on ruins, and lava, and antiques, he left others to profit by the lecture, and walked away humming a march or some other favourite air to himself. As little could Seidlits support the abbé's dissertations on the Roman arms, and their manner of using them; although that learned ecclesiastic explained those matters with an accuracy and minuteness which would have astonished one of Cæsar's best centurions. All this learning and eloquence were exhausted in vain to shake the early prejudice which Seidlits had conceived in favour of the firelock and bayonet. He became at length completely sick of antiquities, and often cursed those everlasting curiosities, each of which drew a lecture from the abbé, and were continually crossing their way, whatever road they took in their excursions from Naples.

When Laura was of the party, Seidlits was fond of drawing her from the rest of the company, and conversing with her apart. And she, although not exactly of her brother's way of thinking on the subject of virtù, generally yielded to his solicitation. They talked of their ac-

quaintance in Germany; of domestic affairs; and sometimes their conversation turned upon Carlostein: the virtues of his friend was a subject on which Seidlits dwelt with enthusiasm: he was eager to enumerate instances of his generous nature, and to give proofs of the noble turn of his mind. Laura and Carlostein were the two people on earth for whom Seidlits had the greatest esteem and affection; he was anxious, therefore, that they should esteem each other; and with this view he was apt to dwell on the praises of each to the other. The subject was more agreeable to both than he dreamt of.

CHAPTER LXIII.

The Highlander.

—— Cujus
Dextera per ferrum, pietas spectata per ignes.
OVID.

CAPTAIN SEIDLITS was attended by an elderly man, a native of the North Highlands of Scotland, whose name was Duncan Targe. As there is something singular in this man's story, and in the accidents by which he came into the captain's service, it is not foreign to our purpose to mention a few of the particulars.

His father, who rented a small portion of land of a nobleman of that country, being upon his death-bed, expressed a desire of seeing his master; the nobleman went directly to the hut of his tenant, and condoled with him on the melancholy state he seemed to be in. 'I am greatly indebted to your lordship,' said the dying man, 'for the condescension and kindness which you have always shewed to me. I am now dying, my lord, and would willingly leave to so good a master what I have of the greatest value in this world.'

'I am happy to hear, my good friend,' said his lordship, 'that you have any thing of value to leave; for I

was much afraid that you had lost the whole, or the greatest part, of what you had, when, contrary to my advice, you became surety for your relation at Inverness; but whatever you have I must insist upon your leaving it all to your little son Duncan here; and whatever his portion is, I am more disposed to add to it, than diminish it.'

'Little Duncan is all I have to leave,' replied the poor man; 'and the greatest uneasiness I have in dying, is the thought of the destitute condition of that poor boy; for my relations at Inverness are all ruined by the same misfortune which has reduced me. I therefore earnestly entreat of your lordship to accept of this poor orphan, as a pledge of my regard, and the only legacy I have to bestow.'

'I do accept of him with all my heart and soul,' cried his lordship; 'and if he proves as honest a man as his father, nothing but death shall part him and me.'

'Praise be to the Almighty,' cried the dying man, with uplifted eyes and arms. 'Thanks to the gracious God of heaven and earth for all his goodness to me and mine!—Oh! my good lord,' continued he, addressing the nobleman, 'you have made me a happy man.'—Here the sudden gush of joy overwhelmed the feeble heart of this poor man; he fell back on his heath pillow, and expired.

The nobleman led the boy home to his castle, and after placing him some years at school, took him to attend his own person. He was in this situation when the rebellion broke out in the year 1745; in which his master unfortunately taking a part, young Targe, being then a stripling of fifteen or sixteen years of age, accompanied him, and continued inseparably attached to his lordship after the battle of Culloden, during a considerable time in which they skulked among the most remote parts of the Highlands.

On this trying occasion, Targe, being a youth of a hardy Highland constitution and spirit, had the satisfaction of repaying his master for all his former kindness by his unshaken fidelity and grateful attachment. In one

or two instances he actually saved him from starving among the mountains, by bringing him, at the risk of his own life, provisions from those places where his lordship could not appear without a certainty of being discovered. At length they both escaped to the continent, where this unfortunate nobleman died; after which, Targe was taken into the service of Marshal Keith, by whom he was recommended to Colonel Seidlits, and now attended his son.

Buchanan and Targe generally attended their masters in their excursions around Naples. Mr. N—— had remarked an intimacy between them ever since Captain Seidlits and he met at Rome. On perceiving them walking apart from the other servants in close conversation together, 'I'll lay a bet,' said Mr. N—— to Captain Seidlits, 'that your servant is from Scotland.'

'He certainly is originally from that country,' replied Seidlits; 'but I cannot conceive how you came to discover this so readily.'

'Nay, I should not have discovered it,' said Mr. N——; 'but I was convinced by my servant's sudden and great intimacy with him that *he* had.'

Sometime after this, Zeluco and his lady, Madame de Seidlits, Carlostein, Mr. N——, Mr. Steele, and Captain Seidlits, went to pass the day and dine at Portici; neither Buchanan nor Targe had been ordered to attend their masters on that occasion. As the company were returning to town, Captain Seidlits took notice of this accident to Mr. N——; and they amused themselves with various observations on the source of the great friendship which was so suddenly formed between their two domestics. While they were conversing, Mr. N—— saw one of his footmen coming at full gallop towards them from Naples. 'What is the matter, Dick?' cried Mr. N——.

'Lord! sir,' the man replied, 'Captain Seidlits's servant, Duncan Targe, has cut poor Mr. Buchanan almost to pieces.'

'Impossible!' cried N——; 'what! his own countryman?'

'Yes, please your honour; they had a quarrel about the queen; and so they fought in the garden with broad swords.'

'About the queen!—Nonsense!' cried Mr. N——; 'what queen?'

'The queen of Scotland, please your honour,' said the servant.

'The fellow's certainly mad,' said N——. 'There is no queen of Scotland, fool.'

'I don't know whether there is or not,' replied the servant; 'but I am sure that Mr. Buchanan called her a w——; upon which Mr. Targe called him a liar; so they challenged each other; and so Mr. Buchanan is desperately wounded; and so I was ordered to come and acquaint your honour.'

Being able to get no better explanation from this messenger, Mr. N—— and Captain Seidlits rode on before the rest of the company; and after proper investigation, were informed of all the particulars of this curious adventure.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms,
And as a child, whom scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast;
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

GOLDSMITH.

When the party was arranged for dining at Portici, and Buchanan understood that neither he nor his friend Targe were ordered to attend, the former invited his countryman to dine upon hotch-potch, and minced collops, two Scottish dishes, which he had previously instructed the cook at the inn how to dress. The invitation

is joyfully accepted by Targe. After dinner, as neither as an enemy to the bottle, they pushed it pretty briskly etween them, and the conversation became more and ore animated every moment; while they talked of absent friends, the days of former years, the warlike renown Scotland, the great men it had produced, and the romantic beauties of the country, they were in perfect union; and when Targe, who had a tolerable voice, sung e songs of Lochaber, Gilderoy, the Last Time I came er the Muir, and the Flowers of the Forest, the sympathetic tears flowed mutually from their eyes; but with l the prejudices which those two Caledonians had in mmon, there were some articles in which they differed iametrically.

Targe's birth and education have been already menoned, and his political attachments accounted for; but uchanan was born and educated among the Whigs of e west of Scotland, the descendants of the ancient Conanters, who suffered so much oppression and religious ersecution by the absurd policy of the ministers of harles II and his brother James, which is still remembered with horror in that part of the country.

His father was a farmer, who was at an expense which could ill afford, by supporting him at a neighbouring niversity for several years; for the poor man's great ambition was to breed him to the church, or, as he himself pressed it, to *see his son George shake his head in a pulpit.* ut while the youth was prosecuting his studies, the faher's hopes were blasted, and Buchanan's plan of life enrely altered, by the natural consequence of an illicit conexion he had with a young woman.

This transgression being viewed in a more atrocious ght in that part of Scotland than in the metropolis of ngland, and poor Buchanan being threatened at once ith the public reprehension of the church and the private dignation of his own relations, fled to London, and was indly received by some of his countrymen; in whose

breasts compassion for the delinquent had greater influence than horror for his crime.

Several attempts for placing him in a more independent way having failed, and Buchanan being impatient of remaining a burden on his friends, he accepted of an offer of going into the service of the earl of ———, where he remained several years, and was afterwards, at the recommendation of Lady Elizabeth, placed with her nephew on his going abroad.

As Buchanan's political sentiments were so different from those of Targe, it would have been fortunate if the two friends had kept clear of any discourse on such subjects; but while Buchanan was endeavouring to prove that the city of Naples was inferior in beauty to that of Glasgow, the view from the castle of Edinburgh far more sublime than that from the castle of Saint Elmo, and the palace of Cassetta, though larger, in much worse taste than Holyroodhouse; Targe interrupted him, and remarked with a sigh, that 'it was a thousand pities that the just proprietor of that palace, the lineal descendant of so many kings, should be obliged to live like a private person in Italy.'

'It would be a much greater pity,' Buchanan remarked, 'to see popery and arbitrary power established in Great Britain and Ireland.'

'I do not believe there was any danger of either,' replied Targe.

'*Your* creed on that subject is not gospel, Mr. Targe,' said Buchanan; 'in my opinion it was prudent in the nation therefore to secure those important points, by the limitations made at the Revolution.'

'Those limitations,' answered Targe, 'might have been applied to King James and his descendants; and the same restraints which have kept one race of kings within the limits of law, would have kept another.'

'There is an essential difference between the two cases,' replied Buchanan; 'a man will be very happy to accept of

a good estate to which he has no immediate claim, upon conditions which the possessor of the estate and his posterity would think it a hardship to have forced on them, particularly if they believed the estate had been transmitted to them through a long line of ancestors. And it is natural to suppose, that the latter would be more apt to break conditions which they considered as unjust, than the former to destroy the sole foundation of his right; it is therefore wise, Mr. Targe, in the British nation to adhere to the family it has placed on the throne, as long as they adhere to the conditions on which they were there placed; and I have not heard that any of them ever shewed a disposition to infringe them.'

'Whatever reason the nation had to complain of the father, his descendants were innocent,' replied Targe; 'and if they had a particle of equity or gratitude in their character, they never would have attempted to break through those conditions on which they were replaced on the throne of their ancestors.'

'Why, truly, Mr. Targe, if ever you heard of any kings who were withheld by mere considerations of gratitude or equity from extending their power, or encroaching on the rights of their subjects, when they thought they could do it with safety, you have the advantage of me; and I am apt to believe, that if ever such there were, the edition is now pretty much exhausted, and not likely to be renewed.'

'You seem to have a very bad opinion of kings,' said Targe.

'I cannot say I was ever intimate with either kings or princes,' replied Buchanan, 'so that I can say nothing about them from personal acquaintance; but from what I have heard of them by word of mouth, and read of them in history, I must confess my opinion of them in general is not very favourable.'

'I hope you do not think them naturally worse than other men,' added Targe.

'No, Mr. Targe, I certainly do not; but they are so

accustomed from their youth to be flattered and dawted,* to have every thing done for them, and to make so few exertions of their own; often surrounded by those who have an interest in leading them astray, and sometimes by such a worthless set, that if they are not at the beginning naturally better than other men, they run a great risk of becoming artificially worse. But be they good, bad, or indifferent, I am clear for the subjects keeping such a portion of power in their own hands, as will render it very dangerous for the monarch to make any attempt against their rights; and I am clear in another point, Mr. Targe, that when the king is such a gawk† as to fly with his young one into an enemy's land, it would be the height of folly ever to let either the one or the other back to the nest.'

'Well, I cannot help thinking it extremely unjust,' replied Targe, 'to deprive an innocent person of his right, and to make him suffer so severely for the faults of others, if faults there were.'

'Unjust!' cried Buchanan; 'Does not heaven visit the iniquity of fathers upon their children?'

'Heaven has a right to do what it pleases,' said Targe; 'but, please God, I never would take it on *me* to do such a thing, had I the power to-morrow.'

'But the thing is done already,' said Buchanan, 'and cannot be undone, without more fighting about it than the cause is worth.'

'Many a brave man, not only in Scotland but also in England and Ireland, have shed their blood in the cause of the house of Stuart,' said Targe.

'I wish those who are disposed to shed their blood in such a cause much good of it,' said Buchanan, shrugging his shoulders; 'as for my own part, I shall be as ready as my neighbours to fight for my religion or my country; but as for shedding one drop of my blood for the differ-

* Indulged.

† Gawk, a Saxon word still used in Scotland, signifies a cuckow, a silly fellow.

ace between one king and another, when the good f the country is no way concerned, I beg to be excus-d.'

'Do you not think fighting for your king is fighting r your country?' said Targe.

'Very often it is just the reverse,' replied Buchanan; fighting for a bad king, I consider as fighting against ıy country.'

'Yet you must acknowledge,' resumed Targe, 'that ings reign by the appointment of God; and therefore seems to be a very daring thing in man to attempt to ethrone them.'

'The pestilence is by the appointment of God,' re-rted Buchanan; 'yet we use every means in our ower to drive it out of the land.'

Targe seeming a little disconcerted and displeased at his observation, Buchanan filled a bumper, and gave for is toast, 'The Land of Cakes.'

This immediately dispersed the cloud which began to ather on the other's brow.

Targe drank the toast with enthusiasm, saying, 'May ıe Almighty pour his blessings on every hill and valley ı it!—that is the worst wish, Mr. Buchanan, that I ıall ever wish to that land.'

'It would delight your heart to behold the flourishing ondition it is now in,' replied Buchanan; 'it was fast nproving when I left it; and I have been credibly in-rmed since that it is now a *perfect garden*.'

'I am very happy to hear it,' said Targe.

'Indeed,' added Buchanan, 'it has been in a state of ıpid improvement ever since the Union.'

'Damn the Union,' cried Targe; 'it would have im-roved much faster without it.'

'I am not quite clear on that point, Mr. Targe,' said uchanan.

'Depend upon it,' replied Targe, 'the Union was the orst treaty that Scotland ever made.'

'I shall admit,' said Buchanan, 'that she might have

made a better—but bad as it is, our country reaps some advantage from it.'

'All the advantages are on the side of England.'

'What do you think, Mr. Targe,' said Buchanan, 'of the increase of trade since the Union, and the riches which have flowed into the Lowlands of Scotland from that quarter?'

'Think,' cried Targe; 'why I think they have done a great deal of mischief to the Lowlands of Scotland.'

'How so, my good friend!' said Buchanan.

'By spreading luxury among the inhabitants, the never-failing forerunner of effeminacy of manners. Why, I was assured,' continued Targe, 'by Serjeant Lewis Macniel, a Highland gentleman in the Prussian service, that the Lowlanders in some parts of Scotland are now very little better than so many English.'

'O fye!' cried Buchanan, 'things are not come to that pass as yet, Mr. Targe; your friend the serjeant assuredly exaggerates.'

'I hope he does,' replied Targe; 'but you must acknowledge,' continued he, 'that by the Union Scotland has lost her existence as an independent state: her name is swallowed up in that of England: Only read the English newspapers; they mention England as if it were the name of the whole island. They talk of the English army—the English fleet—the English every thing; they never mention Scotland, except when one of our countrymen happens to get an office under government; we are then told with some stale gibe, that the person is a Scotchman; or, which happens still more rarely, when any of them is condemned to die at Tyburn, particular care is taken to inform the public, that the criminal is originally from Scotland: but if fifty Englishmen get places or are hanged in one year, no remarks are made.'

'No,' said Buchanan; 'in that case it is passed over as a thing of course.'

The conversation then taking another turn, Targe, who was a great genealogist, descanted on the antiquity of

certain gentlemen's families in the Highlands, which he asserted were far more honourable than most of the noble families either in Scotland or England. 'Is it not shameful,' added he, 'that a parcel of mushroom lords, mere sprouts from the dunghills of law or commerce, the grandsons of grocers and attorneys, should take the pas of gentlemen of the oldest families in Europe?'

'Why, as for that matter,' replied Buchanan, 'provided the grandsons of grocers or attorneys are deserving citizens, I do not perceive why they should be excluded from the king's favour more than other men.'

'But some of them never drew a sword in defence of either their king or country,' rejoined Targe.

'Assuredly,' said Buchanan, 'men may deserve honour and pre-eminence by other means than by drawing their swords. I could name a man who was no soldier, and yet did more honour to his country than all the soldiers or lords or lairds of the age in which he lived.'

'Who was he?' said Targe.

'The man whose name I have the honour to bear,' replied the other; 'the great George Buchanan.'

'Who? Buchanan the historian!' cried Targe.

'Ay, the very same,' replied Buchanan, in a loud voice, being now a little heated with wine, and elevated with vanity, on account of his name. 'Why, sir,' continued he, 'George Buchanan was not only the most learned man, but also the best poet of his time.'

'Perhaps he might,' said Targe, coldly.

'Perhaps!' repeated Buchanan; 'there is no dubitation in the case. Do you remember his description of his own country and countrymen?'

'I cannot say I do,' replied Targe.

'Then I will give you a sample of his versification,' said Buchanan, who immediately repeated with an enthusiastic emphasis, the following lines from Buchanan's Epithalamium on the marriage of Francis the dauphin with Mary queen of Scots.

Illa pharetratis est propria gloria Scotis,
Cingere venatu saltus, superare natando
Flumina, ferre famem, contemnere frigora et æstus,
Nec fossa et muris patriam, sed marte tueri,
Et spreta incolumem vita defendere famam;
Polliciti servare fidem, sanctumque vereri
Numen amicitiæ, mores, non munus amare.
Artibus his, totum fremerent cum bella per orbem,
Nullaque non leges tellus mutaret avitas
Externo subjecta jugo, gens una vetustis
Sedibus antiqua sub libertate residit.
Substitit hic Gothi furor, hic gravis impetus hæsit
Saxonis, hic Cimber superato Saxone, et acri
Perdomito Neuster Cimbro.——

'I cannot recollect any more.'

'You have recollected too much for me,' said Targe; 'for although I was several years at an academy in the Highlands, yet I must confess I am no great Latin scholar.'

'But the great Buchanan,' said the other, 'was the best Latin scholar in Europe; he wrote that language as well as Livy or Horace.'

'I shall not dispute it,' said Targe.

'And was over and above a man of the first-rate genius,' continued Buchanan, with exultation.

'Well, well, all that may be,' replied Targe, a little peevishly, 'but let me tell you one thing, Mr. Buchanan, if he could have swopt * one-half of his genius for a little more honesty, he would have made an advantageous exchange, although he had thrown all his Latin into the bargain.'

'In what did he ever shew any want of honesty?' said Buchanan.

'In calumniating and endeavouring to blacken the reputation of his rightful sovereign, Mary queen of Scots,' replied Targe, 'the most beautiful and accomplished princess that ever sat on a throne.'

'I have nothing to say either against her beauty or

* To swop is an old English word still used in Scotland, signifying to exchange.

ıer accomplishments,' resumed Buchanan; 'but surely, Mr. Targe, you must acknowledge that she was a——?'

'Have a care what you say, sir!' interrupted Targe. 'I'll permit no man that ever wore breeches to speak disrespectfully of that unfortunate queen.'

'No man that ever wore either breeches or a filibeg,'* replied Buchanan, 'shall prevent me from speaking the truth when I see occasion.'

'Speak as much truth as you please, sir,' rejoined Targe; 'but I declare that no man shall calumniate the memory of that beautiful and unfortunate princess in my presence, while I can yield a claymore.'†

'If you should yield fifty claymores, you cannot deny that she was a Papist,' said Buchanan.

'Well, sir,' cried Targe, 'what then? She was like other people, of the religion in which she was bred.'

'I do not know where *you* may have been bred, Mr. Targe,' said Buchanan; 'for aught I know, you may be an adherent to the worship of the scarlet whore yourself. I should be glad to have that point cleared up before we proceed farther.'

'I cannot say that I understand your drift, sir,' replied Targe; 'but I am an adherent neither of a scarlet whore, nor of whores of any other colour.'

'If that is the case,' said Buchanan, 'you ought not to interest yourself in the reputation of Mary queen of Scots.'

'I fear you are too nearly related to the false slanderer whose name you bear,' said Targe.

'I glory in the name; and should think myself greatly obliged to any man who could prove my relation to the great George Buchanan,' cried the other.

'He was nothing but a disloyal calumniator,' cried Targe, 'who attempted to support falsehoods by forgeries; which I thank heaven are now fully detected.'

'You are thankful for a very small mercy, resumed

* A part of the Highland dress which serves instead of breeches.

† The Highland broad-sword.

Buchanan; 'but since you provoke me to it, I will tell you in plain English, that your bonny Queen Mary was the strumpet of Bothwell, and the murderer of her husband.'

No sooner had he uttered the last sentence, than Targe flew at him like a tiger; and they were separated with difficulty, by Mr. N——'s groom, who was in the adjoining chamber, and had heard the altercation.

'I insist on your giving me satisfaction, or retracting what you have said against the beauitful queen of Scotland,' cried Targe.

'As for retracting what I have said,' replied Buchanan, 'that is no habit of mine; but with regard to giving you satisfaction, I am ready for that, to the best of my ability; for let me tell you, sir, though I am not a Highlandman, I am a Scotchman as well as yourself, and not entirely ignorant of the use of the claymore; so name your hour, and I will meet you to-morrow morning.'

'Why not directly?' cried Targe, 'there is nobody in the garden to interrupt us.'

'I should have chosen to have settled some things first; but since you are in such a hurry, I will not balk you. I will step home for my sword, and be with you directly,' said Buchanan.

CHAPTER LXV.

— Et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos.
VIRG.

THE groom interposed, and endeavoured to reconcile the two enraged Scots, but without success. Buchanan soon arrived with his sword, and they retired to a private spot in the garden. The groom next tried to persuade them to decide their difference by *fair boxing*. This was rejected by both the champions, as a mode of fighting unbecoming gentlemen. The groom asserted that the best *gentlemen* in England sometimes fought in that manner;

and gave as an instance a boxing-match, of which he himself had been a witness, between Lord G.'s *gentleman* and a *gentleman*-farmer at York races, about the price of a mare.'

'But our quarrel,' said Targe, 'is about the reputation of a queen.'

'That, for certain,' replied the groom, 'makes a difference.'

Buchanan unsheathed his sword.

'Are you ready, sir?' cried Targe.

'That I am.—Come on, sir,' said Buchanan; 'and the Lord be with the righteous.'

'Amen!' cried Targe; and the conflict began.

Both the combatants understood the weapon they fought with; and each parried his adversary's blows with such dexterity, that no blood was shed for some time; at length Targe making a feint at Buchanan's head, gave him suddenly a severe wound in the thigh.

'I hope you are now sensible of your error,' said Targe, dropping his point.

'I am of the same opinion I was,' cried Buchanan; 'so keep your guard.' So saying, he advanced more briskly than ever upon Targe; who, after warding off several strokes, wounded his antagonist a second time. Buchanan, however, showed no disposition to relinquish the combat; but this second wound being in the forehead, and the blood flowing with profusion into his eyes, he could no longer see distinctly, but was obliged to flourish his sword at random; without being able to perceive the movements of his adversary, who, closing with him, became master of his sword, and with the same effort threw him to the ground; and standing over him, he said, 'This may convince you, Mr. Buchanan, that your's is not the righteous cause; you are in my power, but I will act as the queen whose character I defend would order, were she alive. I hope you will live to repent of the injustice you have done to that amiable and unfortunate princess.' He then assisted Buchanan to rise. Buchan-

an made no immediate answer; but when he saw Targe assisting the groom to stop the blood which flowed from his wounds, he said, 'I must acknowledge, Mr. Targe, that you behave like a gentleman.'

After the bleeding was in some degree diminished by the dry lint, which the groom, who was an excellent farrier, applied to the wounds, they assisted him to his chamber; and then the groom rode away to inform Mr. N—— of what had happened; but the wound becoming more painful, Targe proposed sending for a surgeon. Buchanan then said, that the surgeon's mate, belonging to one of the ships of the British squadron then in the bay, was, he believed, on shore; and as he was a Scotsman, he would like to employ him rather than a foreigner. Having mentioned where he lodged, one of Mr. N——'s footmen went immediately for him. He returned soon after, saying, that the surgeon's mate was not at his lodging, nor expected for some hours; 'but I will go and bring the French surgeon,' continued the footman.

'I thank you, Mr. Thomas,' said Buchanan; 'but I will have patience till my own countryman returns.'

'He may not return for a long time,' said Thomas. 'You had best let me run for the French surgeon, who they say has a great deal of skill.'

'I am much obliged to you, Mr. Thomas,' added Buchanan; 'but neither Frenchman nor Spanishman shall dress my wounds when a Scottishman is to be found, for love or money.'

'They are to be found for the one or the other, as I am credibly informed, in most parts of the world,' said Thomas.

'As *my* countrymen,' replied Buchanan, 'are distinguished for letting slip no means of improvement, it would be very strange if many of them did not use that of travelling,' Mr. Thomas.

'It would be very strange, indeed! I own it,' said the footman.

'But are you certain of this young man's skill in his business when he does come?' said Targe.

'I confess I have had no opportunity to know any thing of his skill,' answered Buchanan; 'but I know for certain that he is sprung from very respectable people. His father is a minister of the gospel; and it is not likely that his father's son will be deficient in the profession to which he was bred.'

'It would be still less likely had the son been bred to preaching,' said Targe.

'That is true,' replied Buchanan; 'but I have no doubt of the young man's skill; he seems to be a very *douce** lad; it will be an encouragement to him to see that I prefer him to another, and also a comfort to me to be attended by my countryman.'

'Countryman or not countryman,' said Thomas, 'he will expect to be paid for his trouble as well as another.'

'Assuredly,' said Buchanan; 'but it was always a maxim with me, and shall be to my dying day, that we should give our own fish-guts to our own sea-mews.'

'Since you are so fond of your own sea-mews,' said Thomas, 'I am surprised you were so eager to destroy Mr. Targe there.'

'That proceeded from a difference in politics, Mr. Thomas,' replied Buchanan, 'in which the best of friends are apt to have a misunderstanding; but though I am a whig and he is a torry, I hope we are both honest men; and as he behaved generously when my life was in his power, I have no scruple in saying, that I am sorry for having spoken disrespectfully of any person, dead or alive, for whom he has an esteem.'

'Mary queen of Scots acquired the esteem of her very enemies,' resumed Targe; 'the elegance and engaging sweetness of her manners were irresistible to every heart that was not steeled by prejudice or jealousy.'

'She is now in the hands of a Judge,' said Buchanan,

* Douce, a Scottish expression, meaning gentle and well-disposed.

'who can neither be seduced by fair appearances, nor imposed on by forgeries and fraud.'

'She is so, Mr. Buchanan,' replied Targe; 'and her rival and accusers are in the hands of the same Judge.'

'We had best leave them all to his justice and mercy then, and say no more on the subject,' added Buchanan; 'for if Queen Mary's conduct on earth was what you believe it was, she will receive her reward in heaven, where her actions and sufferings are recorded.'

'One thing more I will say,' rejoined Targe; 'and that is only to ask of you, whether it is probable that a woman, whose conscience was loaded with the crimes imputed to her, could have closed the varied scene of her life, and have met death with such serene and dignified courage, as Mary did?'

'I always admired that last awful scene,' replied Buchanan, who was melted by the recollection of Mary's behaviour on the scaffold; 'and I will freely acknowledge, that the most innocent person that ever lived, or the greatest hero recorded in history, could not face death with greater composure than the queen of Scotland; she supported the dignity of a queen, while she displayed the meekness of a Christian.'

'I am exceedingly sorry, my dear friend, for the misunderstanding that happened between us,' said Targe affectionately, and holding forth his hand in token of reconciliation; 'and I am now willing to believe, that your friend Mr. George Buchanan was a very great poet, and understood Latin as well as any man alive.'

Here the two friends shook hands with the utmost cordiality; but Targe, observing that Buchanan's face seemed a little pale, and that the wound in his thigh bled profusely through the dressings, begged that he would allow some other surgeon to be brought; and Mr. N——'s footman swore, if he did not he would certainly bleed to death.

Buchanan having rebuked Thomas for swearing, added, 'You know, or at least ought to know, Thomas, that

let him bleed as he pleases, no man can die till his time is come; but even if I were to die of this wound, I should be sorry that the last act of my life was that of preferring a foreigner, not only to a countryman, but to one born in the same parish with myself, which this young man was. As for Mr. Targe here, I take you to witness, that I declare him innocent, happen what may.' As he pronounced these words, the young surgeon, who had been so long expected, entered the chamber, and having examined Buchanan's wounds, and made proper applications, he strongly enjoined his patient to keep quietly in his room for some time, without attempting to walk, otherwise the wound in his thigh would be very tedious in healing; and there might even be some risk of a fever. And the patient agreeing to follow his injunctions, the surgeon promised him a speedy cure.

Mr. N—— and Captain Seidlits heard with satisfaction the prognostic of the surgeon; and were equally astonished and entertained when they were informed of the cause and circumstances of this quarrel.

CHAPTER LXVI.

—— Placet impares
Animos sub juga ahenea
Mittere. HOR.

THAT course of dissipation in which Laura was involved for a considerable time after the arrival of her brother and Carlostein, was by no means agreeable to the natural turn of her mind, yet it certainly was of service to her in her present situation. An unremitting succession of balls, assemblies, operas, and other public entertainments, however they may be oppressive to those who enjoy domestic happiness, are relaxations from domestic misery.

The dispositions of Zeluco and of Laura scarcely touched in a single point; it was impossible therefore that there could be any cordial adhesion or agreement between them:

he was vain and ostentatious, she modest; he was dissembling, she open; he was malicious, she candid: some of his pleasures were of so gross a nature that the mere mention of them was shocking to her; the gentle affections of the heart, the emotions of filial affection, the glow of friendship, the effusions of gratitude, and meltings of compassion, which alternately delighted and afflicted, but always occupied the feeling soul of Laura, were sentiments of which Zeluco had hardly any idea.

Neither did the most sublime beauties of nature, the most exquisite imitations of art, or the works of genius of any kind, to all of which she was feelingly alive, afford any enjoyment to the mind of Zeluco; although from vanity and affectation he pretended to admire some of them, and had made himself master of the common cant of *virtù*. Zeluco, in short, had no taste in common with Laura; so that this ill-assorted pair could not carry on a conversation interesting to both on any one subject. It is true, Laura had *never* liked him; all that Father Pedro had reported in his favour, joined to the good opinion of her mother, was not sufficient to overcome the bad impression she had early formed of Zeluco; but till she actually became his wife, she could form no adequate notion of a character whose depravity developed to her abhorring heart more and more every hour.

As soon as Laura's beauty had become familiar, and of course began to pall on the jaded senses of Zeluco, she lost, in his eyes, the only attraction she had ever possessed; for he was incapable of deriving satisfaction from any of her numerous accomplishments, and the purity of her mind equally abominated his conversation and his tastes. He sought in venal beauty, and in variety, the pleasure which he no longer had in the chaste charms of Laura: the consequence of this pursuit was tedious intervals of *ennui*, and its never failing companion ill-humour; for what he intended to mitigate was found to irritate the evil that oppressed him. Wretched himself, he could not support the sight of the happiness of others, and particu-

larly, nothing provoked him so much as the idea of his wife's being in a state of composure, while he felt himself tormented with malignant passions; and he often endeavoured to exhaust the virulence which corroded his own breast upon the unhappy Laura, who, before her marriage, had never known but from description what envy or ill-humour was.

Hard, however, and painful to support as his ill-humours were, it appeared not so disgusting to Laura as the fits of fondness for her with which he was occasionally seized; and such was the unsupportable caprice of the man, that his fondness was sometimes displayed immediately after having insulted her with the most unprovoked ill-usage. On these occasions he was an object of horror to her, and had what she suffered been known, this beautiful woman, who shone at every public place of entertainment in all the brilliancy of diamonds and of equipage, would have been an object of universal compassion.

In the meantime, the opportunities which Carlostein daily had of seeing and conversing with Laura, convinced him that the beauty and elegance of her face and person were equalled by her good sense and other mental accomplishments. She, on her part, thought him the most engaging of men, and felt a warmer approbation of him than of any other man whose good qualities had ever before attracted her esteem. She was conscious of a real friendship for Mr. N——, and had the highest opinion of the worth of his character; but the sentiments which she now experienced for Carlostein were of a still more interesting nature. When Mr. N—— visited her, she was pleased the moment she saw him enter the room; but if he did not come when expected, the disappointment did not so far affect the natural cheerfulness of her temper, as to prevent her from enjoying other company. But if the same happened with respect to Carlostein, if any accident prevented his coming when there was reason to expect him, her real cheerfulness fled, and nothing but an

affected substitute remained with her for the rest of the evening.

Alarmed at this, and sensible of the impropriety of an attachment which was gradually gaining upon her: 'Ah! let me banish this man from my thoughts,' said she often to herself; 'let me remember that I am the wife of another.' This immediately brought the image of that other before her mind's eye, in all the deformity of vice; and the contrast was so striking, and so much in favour of him whom she thought it a duty to forget, that he was pressed nearer to her heart by the very efforts she made to remove him; and the more she struggled, the deeper was the hook from which she wished to disengage herself fixed in her vitals.

After remaining several months at Naples, and seldom passing a day without being in company with Laura, Carlostein had not ventured to give a hint of his passion, but had endeavoured to conceal it from her, and the rest of the world, as much as he could: while she, on her part, behaved with such circumspection, that neither her mother, brother, Signora Sporza, nor any other acquaintance, had an idea of her having any particular attachment to Carlostein. Even Zeluco, though cursed with a jealous temper, ever on the watch, and convinced that he never had possessed the affections of his wife, harboured no particular suspicion of Carlostein.

How well so ever Laura and Carlostein succeeded in concealing their sentiments from the rest of the world, they failed with regard to each other. Laura had too much penetration not to perceive that she occupied the attention of Carlostein in an uncommon degree; and she sometimes remarked this on occasions when a less acute or less interested observer would have been apt to think that she engaged his attention less than any other person in company. While his behaviour to her, in the eyes of others, appeared uniform and unvaried, because it was always respectful; *she* perceived a variety of shades in his conduct in her presence, which depended, in some degree, on the

company present, yet always harmonized with the humour she seemed to be in.

The sex in general are very penetrating on this subject, and it rarely happens that a man is sincerely in love with a woman, without his passion's being known to her before he is fully convinced of it himself. Notwithstanding that Carlostein therefore had never said a syllable on the subject of love to Laura, nor had presumed to indicate any such sentiment by his looks, or in any particular deviated from that delicacy of behaviour due to a woman of virtue; she was as fully convinced of his attachment to her, perhaps more, than if he had made a solemn and earnest declaration of it.

It is more than probable, that Carlostein had some idea also that he was not an object of indifference to her; for although there are accounts of ladies who, while they are passionately fond of their lovers, made them believe, for years together, that they could not endure them, it must be acknowledged that these examples are oftener found in romances than in life, and when found in real life they afford a stronger proof of the lady's pride and the lover's passion, than of the good sense of either. For our behaviour, in all respects, from things of the greatest importance to trifles, is, in spite of ourselves, different to those who engage our affections, from what it is to every other person; and the very effort to behave in the same manner to the beloved object as to others, discovers to an acute observer what is meant to be concealed; for although love is often simulated by those who have it not, it is more difficult to conceal it where it really exists; Carlostein, therefore, ought not to be accused of vanity or presumption, in flattering himself with no common share of the good opinion of Laura.

But he was not more fully convinced of her partiality for himself, than of her dislike to her husband; which Laura endeavoured with equal care and as little success to hide. Such, however, was his veneration for the character of Laura, that he presumed as little from the cer

tainty of the latter as from his hopes of the former; indeed, he could hardly allow himself to wish for a success which he could not enjoy but at the expense of the future peace of mind of the person he loved; and if he ever permitted himself to suppose that the woman he so greatly admired might have a moment of weakness, such was his notion of her disposition and principles, that he was convinced it would be followed by everlasting remorse on her part, and of course by misery on his; for he could not hope that all her partiality for him, or all the sophistry he could use, would persuade a woman of real virtue and dignity to live in a manner inconsistent with both.

If, in consequence of these reflections, Carlostein had withdrawn himself entirely from a connection of such a dangerous tendency, he would no doubt have acted a more prudent part;—but having no delight equal to that of conversing with Laura, no wish on leaving her company but that of meeting her again, the effort was above his power;—all he could do was to endeavour to hide a passion which he was unable to subdue.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Il n'y a point de deguisement qui puisse long-temps cacher l'amour où il est, ni le feindre où il n'est pas. ROCHEFOUCAULT.

It is not improbable that the sentiments which Carlostein and Laura mutually entertained of each other would have been discovered by Zeluco, had not his suspicions been fixed on another object; for, notwithstanding the candid behaviour of his wife, when he spoke to her concerning the nobleman, as was mentioned above, the sparks of jealousy which glowed in Zeluco's breast had never been entirely extinguished, but were rekindled more fiercely than ever on the return of that nobleman from Rome.

As Laura now appeared at all public places, he had

quent opportunities of accosting her; and although
e received his compliments with an air of great reserve,
t he omitted no occasion of addressing her.

One evening in particular, at a very numerous assem-
r, Laura being in company with Signora Sporza, her
sband, her brother, and Carlostein; this nobleman no
ner saw her than he made up to Zeluco's party, and
usual directed his whole assiduity to Laura. Zeluco
served this with *stifled* rage, and *apparent* good-humour;
ura alone discerned the hurricane in his heart through
the sunshine of his countenance.—She arose to with-
aw—the nobleman offered his hand—she seeming not
observe his motion, turned to her husband, who desir-
Carlostein to hand her to her carriage. She imme-
ately presented her hand to him, and the nobleman
sed it.—'I believe, signor,' said Carlostein, 'the lady
tended me the honour.'—At that instant Laura with-
awing her hand from the other to prevent farther dis-
te, took hold of Zeluco's arm, begging him to ac-
mpany her to her carriage, which he did, and drove
me.

When the assembly broke up, as the nobleman press-
across the corridor in some hurry towards his carriage,
s legs were for a moment crossed by the sword of Car-
stein, who instantly loosened it from his belt, making
apology; the other, without paying any regard to this,
shed forward, saying, in an imperious tone, 'Make
y, sir,'—'Make you way, sir,' cried Carlostein, pro-
ked at his insolence, and pushing him to one side.
he nobleman drew and made a lounge at Carlostein,
ose sword being in his hand, he put aside the thrust,
d returning it, hit his antagonist smartly near the eye
th the point of the undrawn sword, and with a jerk
rew the nobleman's sword quite out of his hand.

Carlostein then walked calmly to his own carriage,
ere he found Signora Sporza and Captain Seidlits,
o, instead of going directly to Zeluco's, where they

were to sup, proposed driving a little to enjoy the refreshing breeze from the bay, to which Carlostein assented, without saying a word of what had just happened.

Meanwhile one of Zeluco's servants having heard an imperfect account of the squabble, hastily entered the room where Madame de Seidlits, Laura, and Zeluco were, telling them, 'that the nobleman and Carolstein had fought, that one of them was desperately wounded, and the other killed on the spot.'

'Which of them is killed?' said Zeluco.

'I cannot tell,' said the servant; 'all I know for certain is, that one of them is dead.'

'Go and learn which, blockhead,' cried Zeluco.

As the servant went out, Carolstein entered with Signora Sporza and Captain Seidlits; but Laura's spirits underwent such painful agitation at the servant's intelligence, that after struggling for some time to hide her emotion, she suddenly fainted, and fell from her chair. Being carried to bed she continued greatly disordered; and even after her mother had acquainted her with the true state of the case, which she did as soon as she was herself informed of it, Laura was not able to stir abroad for near a week.

Laura having fainted just as Carlostein appeared, Zeluco's jealous temper, ever ready to put the worse construction on the most innocent occurrence, imputed her being so violently affected to her suspecting from the servant's account that the nobleman was the person killed, and her being confirmed in that suspicion when she saw Carolstein enter the room in good health.

This very idea was a sufficient reason to render Zeluco fonder than ever of Carlostein's company; he invited him very frequently to his house, because he thought that his presence was highly disagreeable to his wife: and this idea seemed the more probable, as Laura, being conscious of the real cause of her fainting, was evidently more constrained and embarrassed in his company than she had

formerly been, all which Zeluco imputed to her aversion to that gentleman on account of his quarrel with the nobleman.

He was confined to his room for several weeks with an inflammation which came on his eye, and some of his friends were imprudent enough to vapour a little about his determination of calling Carlostein to an account as soon as he was fully recovered. Carlostein, who was of a cool temper, took no notice of these, being resolved to regulate his conduct by the behaviour of the nobleman himself, and not by that of his officious friends: but Captain Seidlits, who was of a more fiery disposition, did not behave with the same moderation.

In a company where the captain was, the conversation turned on the quarrel; a friend of the nobleman's gave a representation of it more favourable for him than was consistent with truth.—'I am convinced,' said Seidlits, 'you have not received that account of the matter from the nobleman himself, for he knows that it happened very differently.'—'Do you not allow,' said the other, 'that the baron's sword was in the scabbard?'—'I do,' replied Seidlits.—'It was highly insulting then,' said the other, 'to make use of it in that state; why did he not draw it?'—'It was a present from the king, his master,' replied Seidlits; 'my friend has a high value for that sword, and does not like to draw it on *slight* occasions.' Here, contrary to the expectation of some of the company, the conversation dropped; but it was afterwards repeated to Laura.

The next time she saw her brother, she blamed him for making so haughty an answer; adding, that it might have bad consequences.—'I am sorry to have done what you disapprove of, my dear sister,' said Seidlits; 'but as for the consequences, I regard them not, and I am sure Carlostein regards them as little as I do.'

Signora Sporza, who with Mr. N—— was the only other person present, observed to Seidlits, 'That he might, if he pleased, despise the open resentment of a fair ene-

my, but he would do well to remember, that in the country where they were, there was a mode of avenging injuries which his friend Carlostein ought to be on his guard against, otherwise than by relying on courage alone.' She hinted at the same time, that there was a greater risk of a vengeance of the latter kind from the nobleman and his relations, than of that which Captain Seidlits seemed so much to despise.

Laura left the room abruptly when this remark was made, but not before Signora Sporza observed her change colour, and appear greatly agitated. This was the first time that Signora Sporza had any suspicion of Laura's partiality for Carlostein; Mr. N—— had conceived some notion of it a few days before, from an incident not worth mentioning, and which would have escaped the observation perhaps of any other person. He found a pretext for withdrawing soon after Laura left the room; and upon her return, Signora Sporza was confirmed in her suspicions, for in spite of the pains which Laura had taken to wash away the traces of tears, it was plain she had been crying.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Nam tibi cum facie mores natura pudicos,
Et raras dotes ingeniumque dedit.

Ovid.

The words which had fallen from Signora Sporza, concerning the resentment of the nobleman who had been hurt by Carlostein, and the mode of revenge he might adopt, made a lasting impression on Laura. She thought Carlostein in the greatest danger of being secretly murdered, if he were not openly called to the field; she considered herself as the original cause of the hazard to which he was exposed, and which she feared was increased by the imprudence of her brother: her imagination dwelt on the horrors that might ensue.

Zeluco one evening said to her, that he had an inclination to go the following day to Puzzoli, and to cross the bay between that town and Baia; and as she had expressed a desire to see the Ponte de Caligula, the baths of Nero, the tomb of Aggrippina, and the other ruins of that seat of ancient luxury, he would take her with him. Laura assented. But going to bed with her thoughts brooding over the same train of reflections which had infested her mind for some days past, she dreamt of bravos and assassination the whole night. She sometimes thought she beheld Carlostein stretched on the ground, pale and bloodless;—at other times the blood seemed to flow from a recent wound in his side; and as often as she stooped to lend him assistance, she imagined that her husband prevented her by terrifying looks and insulting language. Those visions disordered her so much, that she resolved next morning to decline the proposed jaunt to Puzzoli.

Sometime after she arose, Zeluco sent her word, that Captain Seidlits and he waited for her at breakfast. The captain had accidentally called earlier than usual, and as soon as his sister entered the room, he told her that he and Carlostein intended to accompany Zeluco and her to Baia. Laura endeavoured to excuse herself. 'What is the matter now,' said Zeluco: 'you had no objection last night?' She still wished to decline going; but Zeluco suspecting that her only reason was because Carlostein was of the party, determined that she *should* go. He and Laura went in the carriage accordingly, Seidlits and Carlostein accompanying them on horseback. After wandering some time along this beautiful coast, Zeluco told Seidlits, he would lead him to see something peculiarly curious; but as it was at some distance, and difficult of access, he begged of Carlostein to remain with Laura till their return.

Seidlits agreed to the proposal, because he thought it would be agreeable to his sister to be entertained during this interval by his friend; Zeluco made it, because he

thought it would be in the highest degree disagreeable to her; Laura heard it with surprise, and Carlostein with pleasure.

When Zeluco and the captain left them, they walked slowly on without considering where they went, and without exchanging a word, till they arrived at a shady seat, from which the various beauties around might be seen to advantage;—here Carlostein expressed a fear that she was fatigued with walking. She immediately sat down, and he placed himself at her side.

Carlostein and Laura, thus unexpectedly seated together, seemed entirely absorbed in reflection, and as regardless of the sublime and luxurious scene before their eyes, as if they had been blind; their mutual constraint was so great, that neither was capable of expressing a distinct idea. Carlostein made several efforts to begin a conversation, which proceeded no farther than one uninteresting question and answer: Laura had been so terrified with the dreams of the preceding night, that she could think or speak of nothing but what *they* suggested. The careless and blunt temper of her brother disquieted her very much; and she dreaded some mischief from that quarter.

'I fear, sir,' said she, making a great effort to break the silence, and forcing a smile, as if the fear she expressed had not been serious; 'I fear you have an imprudent friend in my brother.'

'Madam!' cried Carlostein, with surprise.

Laura repeated what she had said.

'I consider your brother,' replied Carlostein, 'as the most valuable friend that ever man had. I owe my life to him.'

'Nay,' resumed she, 'I have no design to make a breach between you; but my brother has sometimes a thoughtless and provoking way of speaking, which may lead to very bad consequences, and of which it is the duty of a friend to warn him.'

'I do not conceive,' said Carlostein, 'to what you allude.'

'Nothing', resumed she, 'rankles more in the heart than contemptuous expressions.'

'Unquestionably,' answered he.

'Nor,' added she, 'is there any kind of injury more apt to provoke men to revenge.'

'I am convinced of it,' said Carlostein, unable to guess to what she alluded.

'Then surely,' continued Laura, with hesitation, 'it was imprudent in my brother to speak, as I hear he did on a late occasion.'

'I am convinced you labour under some mistake, madam,' said Carlostein. 'Captain Seidlits, although as fearless as any man alive, is not apt to give wanton provocation.'

'I was told,' said Laura, 'that conversing lately on the unfortunate scuffle in which you were involved, he used terms which might drive your antagonist to measures he otherwise would not think of.'

'The accident which happened in consequence of that foolish affair,' said Carlostein; 'he who gave the first provocation brought it on himself: Captain Seidlits knows that nobody else was to blame, and I dare say he will assert this as often as the affair is talked of.'

'But why irritate him with contemptuous expressions? perhaps he might become sensible he is in the wrong. What my brother says may be carried to him, and excite him to measures which otherwise he would not think of adopting.'

'What measure he may choose to adopt, it is his business to weigh with attention,' said Carlostein; 'but certainly is not worth Captain Seidlits's consideration.'

'Friendship,' said Laura, 'might make him consider that contemptuous language may stimulate to a mode of revenge which no degree of courage can obviate, and no skill can ward off.' She spoke those words with agitation, and the tear trembled in her eye; then recollecting the import of what she was saying, her face was instantly suffused with blushes; yet mustering up all the woman with-

in her, and endeavouring to conceal the true source of her concern, she added; 'he does not think on the remorse and misery *he himself would feel*, should his imprudence be attended with any fatal consequence to——.' Here perceiving that her voice faultered, her embarrassment increased; she hesitated, and was incapable of uttering a distinct word.

It was hardly possible for Carlostein not to see the real motive of her concern and embarrassment; whatever satisfaction he might have in the discovery, he had too much delicacy to seem to perceive either.—'Your brother's friendship,' said he, 'has ever been a source of happiness to me; I should reckon myself unfortunate indeed, if it should ever become a cause of uneasiness to him, and will use every precaution to prevent such an effect, of which, however, I think there is no danger.'

Laura gently bowed her head, by way of thanking him; for although somewhat recovered from her perplexity by Carlostein's reply, she was still afraid to trust her voice with words. She then rose; and after they had walked a little way without speaking, Carlostein began to point out some of the most striking beauties of the landscape in their view; and she assented to his remarks in a manner that evinced how very little they occupied her thoughts. At length, seeing Captain Seidlits and Zeluco approaching, they moved in silence to meet them.

The latter observing the reserved manner in which Laura and Carlostein advanced, concluded that their *tête-à-tête* had been as disagreeable as he intended it should; and the melancholy air which Laura retained, in spite of all her efforts to seem cheerful, he imputed to displeasure for having been left with Carlostein.

Replete with this notion, Zeluco let slip no occasion, while they remained at the inn where they dined, of saying things which he thought would vex and disconcert his wife, without being perceived by Carlostein or Seidlits.

'Has any one heard how his eye is to-day?' said he,

naming the person with whom Carlostein had the quarrel.

'I heard, said Seidlits, 'that it still continues swelled and inflamed.'

'I am told he runs some risk of losing it altogether,' said Zeluco, looking maliciously at Laura.

'I hope not,' said Laura, naturally, and without observing the manner in which he had spoken.

'Would it give you a *great deal* of pain, madam?' rejoined he.

'I should certainly be concerned that such a misfortune happened to any body,' replied she, 'particularly on such an occasion.'

'You will never be forgiven by the ladies, signor,' said Zeluco, addressing Carlostein, 'for spoiling this fine spark's ogling.'

The venom of jealousy in Zeluco's breast was put into a ferment by Laura's answers, natural and mild as they were. When the company were preparing to return, 'Be so obliging, signor,' said he to Carlostein, 'as to take my seat in the carriage; and let me have your horse; I should like to *ride* to town.'

This obliging husband made the proposal with no other view than that of distressing his wife.—Laura's heart beat tumultuously when she heard it; the agitation which she had felt during the conversation she had just had with Carlostein, on which she already had made some reflections, added to the glow of joy she was conscious of, on hearing her husband's proposal, determined this virtuous woman to evade it;—turning from Carlostein therefore to Captain Seidlits, 'I have something particular to communicate to you, brother,' said she, holding forth her hand; 'I beg you will favour me with your company in the carriage.'

'With pleasure,' cried Seidlits, taking his sister's hand. 'Your wife and I have had a quarrel,' added he to Zeluco, 'and I see she wishes for an opportunity to make it up.' So saying, he went with her into the car-

riage, leaving Carlostein disappointed, and Zeluco ready to burst with anger.

Whatever self-approbation Laura felt from this victory of her reason over her inclination, yet when she observed the desponding look of Carlostein, as the carriage passed him, her heart whispered, that if Zeluco should renew his proposal, she ought not to provoke him by a second refusal. She was not put to the temptation. The carriage moved on, and her brother was obliged to ask her oftener than once, what she had to communicate to him, before he was able to rouse her from the reverie in which her thoughts were absorbed, when the carriage proceeded to town.

Zeluco having invited the two gentlemen to sup at his house, where they met with Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza, he could not give vent to the anger which he had so absurdly conceived against his wife, but assumed the appearance of good-humour and extraordinary affection for her. Laura was too much accustomed to him to be his dupe on this occasion. She saw clearly into the real state of his thoughts, and being quite convinced of his rancour, she, who herself was all candour, was so shocked at his affected kindness, that in spite of her unwillingness to give her mother uneasiness, she could not remain with the company, but was obliged to leave them abruptly, on the pretext of ill health.

Madame de Seidlits had intended to remain that night with her daughter, but being at that time in a delicate state of health herself, she was prevailed on to return to her own house, upon Signora Sporza's offering to stay all night with Laura. This was infinitely agreeable to the latter, who wished to be secured from the company of her husband.

CHAPTER LXIX.

No more can faith or candour move;
But each ingenuous deed of love,
Which reason would applaud,
Now, smiling o'er his dark distress,
Fancy malignant strives to dress
Like injury and fraud. AKENSIDE.

ZELUCO retained all his hatred to Signora Sporza, though he thought it expedient to let it lie dormant for the present, and to behave to her with the attention due to a relation of his wife's family. She saw through his dissimulation, and repaid his hatred with a fixed aversion; but this she carefully concealed from Madame de Seidlits, because she knew that it would give her uneasiness. Signora Sporza's affection for Laura was increased by her perceiving that she was unhappy in her marriage; and perhaps by being convinced that she entertained the same sentiments of Zeluco with herself. She did not take the same pains therefore to conceal her sentiments from Laura that she did from Madame de Seidlits. Laura, however, would understand none of her hints, and discouraged all conversation on that subject.

Signora Sporza saw the true motive of her young friend's reserve; and notwithstanding that it would have been agreeable to herself to have talked freely of Zeluco's behaviour and character, yet she could not help approving of Laura's prudence in declining all conversation on such a delicate subject. She beheld with more concern that Laura was sinking into dejection of spirits; and although she strongly suspected her partiality for Carlostein, as well as his passion for her, so far from considering this as an aggravation of Laura's misfortune, she thought an attachment of this kind might prove a salutary antidote against the gloomy despondency, or even despair, with which her young friend was threatened.

With regard to Signora Sporza it has been already

hinted, that whatever her manner of *acting* had been, she was rather a free *thinker* on subjects of this nature; for although she had a high idea of Laura's virtuous principles, she could not but be sensible of the danger of such attachments. It would appear, however, that she thought any danger worth risking that could make a diversion from the dismal state of mind into which Laura was falling, from a continued contemplation of her miserable connection with a morose and jealous husband.

Zeluco was the greatest of all self-tormentors; his envious and gloomy mind was eternally suggesting fresh causes of disquiet to itself. The two ideas which plagued him at present were, first that Laura disliked him, and also that she was fond of another. There was no cure for the first, but his becoming an honest man, which was not in his nature; and the cure of the other was nearly as difficult; for to remove suspicions from the breast of a man given to jealousy, and prevent their returning, would be changing his nature. This passion has a tendency not only to sour the temper, but to obscure the understanding, else how should

—Trifles, light as air,
Be to the jealous confirmation strong
As proofs of Holy Writ.—

Laura's having shewn a disposition to remain at home on hearing that Carlostein was of the party to Baia; her having preferred her brother's company to his when they returned; her having left the company abruptly at supper; and her dejection of spirits from the time that the nobleman was confined by the hurt in his eye, Zeluco imputed to the interest which she took in this nobleman, and to her dislike to Carlostein on that account.

Zeluco was one of those amiable creatures who being seldom at peace with themselves cannot bear that their neighbours should enjoy tranquillity. Laura used the pretence of ill-health for a considerable time after her being obliged to retire from the company at supper, merely

that she might be allowed to keep her apartment, enjoy the society of her mother and Signora Sporza, and be spared from that of her husband.

When she seemed a little better, her brother was added to the number of her visitors; and even after she went abroad, she visited nowhere but at her mother's or Signora Sporza's. Zeluco explained her reserve, low spirits, and love of retirement, in the same manner that he had done her previous behaviour; and his sullenness augmented daily. Laura was endeavouring one day to divert her melancholy with her harpsichord, Zeluco heard the sound while he sat in his own apartment, and it redoubled his ill-humour. He suddenly entered the room where she was playing, and threw himself on a chair opposite to her with every mark of displeasure.

She had observed that taking any notice of him, particularly by speaking to him, on such occasions, never failed to draw from him some brutal answer; she therefore said nothing, but played an air of such soothing melody as might have subdued the rancour of a demon.

'You are mightily fond of Italian music, madam,' said he, after some minutes of silence.

'I am, indeed,' replied she, stopping for a moment, endeavouring to smile upon him, and then resuming the instrument.

'You prefer whatever is Italian, I have observed,' rejoined he, with a malignant look.

'I cannot entirely say that,' answered she, quitting the harpsichord; 'but their music is generally preferred to that of any other nation.'

'Yet you are half a German,' resumed he.

'More than half,' said Laura. 'I was born and educated in my father's country.'

'It is a wonder then that you have not some partiality for your countrymen.'

'I esteem them highly,' said Laura; 'all the world acknowledge them to be a brave and worthy people.'

'But you think the Italians more *amiable*?' added he, prolonging the last word.

Laura made no answer, but applied again to the harpsichord, wishing to put an end to a dialogue which she found highly disagreeable, although she did not comprehend the motive or tendency of it.

Zeluco started up, and walked with a hurried step across the room, and then turning suddenly to Laura, 'You dislike the baron Carlostein, madam, do you not?' resumed he.

'Dislike him, sir?' said she, alarmed and blushing.

'Yes, madam, you hate him.'

'I should be glad,' said she, 'to have no reason to hate any body.'

'And what reason have you for hating him, madam?'

'I have not said that it is *him* I hate,' replied she, with some degree of indignation.

'Oh! you have not *said* it,' rejoined he, mistaking the implication of her words; 'you have only *shewn* it by your behaviour.'

'I do not comprehend your meaning,' said she.

'Why would you not admit him into the carriage on your return to Baia?'

'I wished to converse with my brother,' said she.

'Perhaps you would have preferred another to either,' added he, looking maliciously in her face.

'I do not know that I should,' said Laura.

'But I know it, madam; I know who interests you more than all the world, and on whose account the baron Carlostein is the object of your displeasure.'

Laura could not hear this name without emotion. She again coloured, repeating with a faultering voice, '*My displeasure!*'

'Yes, madam, *your* displeasure,' cried Zeluco, with a raised voice; 'you cannot hide it, you redden with resentment at the bare mention of his name; but I would have you to know, that he is a man whom I esteem; and

I wish the blow he dealt to that fine essenced minion had beat his brains out.'

As he pronounced this with violent emphasis and action, he struck his cane through a mirror, and rushed out of the room, leaving Laura filled with contempt and indignation at his ridiculous and frantic behaviour.

Zeluco, like many other peevish and fiery-tempered people, was apt to display his ill-humour at the expense of his furniture; but Laura had never seen him so violently agitated on any former occasion.

She was not sorry, however, that his suspicions, since suspicions of some person or other he must have, were directed to a man quite indifferent to her.

A footman entering the room as Zeluco went out, she mentioned the mirror having been accidentally broken, and ordered another directly in its place to prevent farther remarks on the subject; and she determined to pass that evening with Signora Sporza.

CHAPTER LXX.

The Indiscretion of a Friend.

HITHERTO Laura had been successful in her endeavours to hide from the servants the ill-footing on which her husband and she were; but Zeluco had spoken during the foregoing dialogue in such a loud tone, that a maid of Laura's, who was in one of the adjoining chambers, heard a great part of it.

This maid felt herself quite overloaded with so much important intelligence, and seeing nobody at home to whom she could conveniently consign it, she hastened to Signora Sporza, whom she knew to be the friend of her mistress, and immediately informed her of all she had heard; and wherever there might have been a gap in the narrative from her not having heard distinctly, she took care to fill it up from her own imagination: so that the whole appeared an uninterrupted scene of brutal abuse

on the part of Zeluco, and of patience and resignation on that of Laura.

When she had finished, '*Voilà un homme,*' said Signora Sporza, speaking in French, that the maid might not understand her; '*voilà un homme fait exprès pour être cocu.*' She then cautioned the maid very earnestly not to mention what she had heard to Madame de Seidlitz, or to any other person, as it might be of very bad consequence to her mistress.

The maid feeling herself greatly relieved by what she had already told, and being averse to do any thing which would injure Laura, thought she might safely promise not to mention it; which she accordingly did, with a sincere intention to keep her word.

As the maid withdrew Baron Carlostein was introduced, and soon after Signora Sporza had a proof in herself of what most people experience; how much easier it is to give good advice than to follow it: for she was so full of indignation at what she had heard, that she could not contain herself more than the maid, but told the whole to the baron, who was much more affected than surprised at the information; for, from the idea he had formed of the character of Zeluco, and what he had observed of his behaviour, particularly on the day of the jaunt to Baia, he was convinced that Zeluco and Laura lived unhappily together, and conjectured that scenes similar to that which Signora Sporza had recounted to him, sometimes passed between them.

In her narration, Signora Sporza discovered great indignation against Zeluco; in listening to it, Carlostein seemed to think only on the unhappiness of Laura: while she abused the former, he compassionated the latter. After having exhausted her rage however, pity became predominant in *her* breast also, and she was actually shedding tears when Laura herself entered the room. As Laura seemed surprised at finding her friend in this state, and began to inquire into the cause of her affliction, Carlostein thought it became him to retire, and leave them at freedom.

Laura then expressed the most tender anxiety for her friend, and begged to know what distressed her.

'Alas! my sweet friend,' said Signora Sporza, 'why should I disturb you with my sorrows?'

'That I may do all in my power to alleviate them,' said Laura; 'that you may shew you have too much confidence in me to hide the cause of your grief from me.'

'Have *you* shewn that confidence in me?' replied she.

'Yes,' replied Laura, 'in every thing that concerned myself alone, or could be remedied. Tell me, therefore, what grieves you, and prove that you think me your friend.'

'I think you an angel,' said Signora Sporza, passionately; 'and I love you with all my soul; but he who is the cause of my present affliction is a monster whom I detest as sincerely as I love you.' She then threw out expressions which plainly indicated that she was acquainted with the scene above mentioned, and knew that she was very ill treated by her husband.

'Good heaven!' cried Laura; 'was this the subject of your conversation with the baron Carlostein, when I entered?'

Signora Sporza owned that they had been conversing on this subject. Laura then begged of her to send to him directly, and entreat him not to give the most distant hint of what she had told him to Captain Seidlits. 'You do not know,' continued she, 'the violence of my brother's temper, and were he to hear any thing of this nature, the consequence would be dreadful indeed.'

Signora Sporza directly wrote a letter to Carlostein in the terms which Laura required; and he immediately returned for answer, that he was aware of the consequences that might follow the mentioning any of the circumstances she had communicated to him, and assuring her he never should.

This quieted Laura's anxiety on this head; and as she could no longer entirely avoid conversing with Signora Sporza on the subject of her husband's ill-treatment, she

endeavoured to soften it, saying, that the particulars had been exaggerated, and that some vexatious news had put him into ill-humour at that time, and made him behave in a manner different from his usual conduct.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Mr. N—— hears from the Baronet.

In the meantime the honourable Mr. N——'s intimacy with Carlostein and Seidlits continued, and gradually grew into friendship, especially with the former, for the character and tastes of Mr. N—— were more analogous to those of Carlostein than of Seidlits; yet he had also a very great degree of esteem for the latter. It is remarkable, that the friendship between Mr. N—— and Carlostein was not interrupted by their being fond of the same woman: both esteemed her highly, neither had a wish inconsistent with her honour; and although Mr. N—— perceived that Laura had a stronger attachment to Carlostein than to any other person, he had also that degree of candour which so few possess, of being able to acquiesce in a preference against himself.

Mr. N—— had heard no accounts of his uncle, the baronet, or Mr. Steele, since he parted with them at Florence; and he had begun to be uneasy about them, when he received a letter from the former, dated Paris, the import of which was to inform him, that they should be detained in that place longer than they intended, by a hurt which Mr. Steele had received in consequence of a fall from his horse, in attempting to leap over a gate in a field a few miles from Paris; that a French gentleman, who saw the accident, had brought him to town in his carriage, much bruised; but he was already better, and would soon be quite well.

The baronet next mentioned, that one *Carr*, a Scotchman, who pretended to be an acquaintance of Buchanan, had called on him, saying, 'He had lately come in a

trading vessel from Naples to Marseilles; that on his landing he had met with a young sailor, who, some years since, had gone to the East Indies as midshipman in an English frigate, which had been lost on the coast of Malabar, but he, with a few others of the crew, were saved; that after various distresses he had been taken into one of the vessels of the country, and again shipwrecked in the Persian gulf; and remained several years in Persia, afterwards had found means to get to Alexandria, and from thence in a trading vessel to Marseilles, where this Carr had met him, and they had travelled together on foot to Paris; but on account of his sharing his purse with this poor sailor, who then lay sick at their lodgings, Carr pretended that his own finances were exhausted; on which account he applied to him for a small supply of money to enable them both to proceed to London. The baronet concludes his letter in this manner.—'You may believe, my dear N——, that I was willing to relieve a man who had behaved so generously; but I wished, in the first place, to ascertain the truth of this Scotchman's story, which I own I thought a little romantic. I gave him, therefore, only a guinea in the meantime, and desired him to return next morning with some proof that he was of Buchanan's acquaintance; and I sent Mr. Steele's servant, Tom Dawson, with him to his lodging, with another guinea to the English sailor: Tom returned within a couple of hours, and informed me he had seen the sailor, who was a young man of three or four and twenty, of the name of Warren; that Carr had shewn him a letter which he said was from Buchanan to a countryman of their own at Edinburgh; that having broken open the seal of this letter, Carr desired Dawson to carry it to me as the only testimony he could give of the truth of his story.

'After perusing it I own I have no doubts of the truth of what Carr told me, and shall certainly supply those two poor fellows with money sufficient to carry them home. Buchanan's epistle is so characteristic that I had

it transcribed, and now send you the copy. As you are no very enthusiastic virtuoso, it may possibly entertain you as much as any manuscript lately dug out of Herculaneum.

'There is another composition which I should be very well pleased to get a sight of, and that is by no less a personage than Steele's servant, Dawson. He told his master the other day, he wished to go to Versailles, and being asked what business he had there; he said, 'He had received a letter from Ben Jackson, your father's groom, desiring him to be sure to send him a description all about France and Paris; and he therefore wished to add a word or two about Versailles, being the king's country-house.' Steele who, you know, would suffer great inconveniency himself, rather than deprive any person depending upon him of such a gratification, immediately assented; and he tells me, that Dawson has been scribbling ever since his return. An account of Paris, and of the French nation, from such a hand, must of course be entertaining. I am sorry, therefore, I cannot send it you with the inclosed.

'Adieu, my dear Edward.—Believe me ever sincerely yours,

'*****.'

CHAPTER LXXII.

Buchanan's Letter.

To Mr. Archibald Campbell, Tobacconist, at the Sign of the Highlander, Canongate, Edinburgh.

DEAR ARCHY, *Naples.*

'I RECEIVED your kind epistle, with the agreeable news that all our friends in the west country are well. I would have acknowledged the favour long ago, but could not find a private hand to carry my letter; for I do not choose to put my friends to the expense of postage, and there-

fore I make it a rule never to write by the post to any but strangers.

'Your fears of my having forgot you are very ill founded; for although it has been my lot to sojourn many years among strangers, yet, thanks be unto God, I never learned to prefer foreigners to my own countrymen: on the contrary, I do feel, that I like my old friends the better in proportion as I increase my new acquaintance. So you see there is little danger of my forgetting *them*, and far less my blood relations; for surely blood is thicker than water.

'As for my master the honourable Mr. N——, he is an exception; for he has been my benefactor, and it is impossible for me to be more attached to the nearest relations I have than to him: he is a kind-hearted and noble-minded gentleman indeed; and although he is most generous on proper occasions, he avoids the idle expense of many of his countrymen, whose extravagance, when they are on their tours, as they call them, renders them the prey and laughing-stock of all the countries through which they pass. And if you were only to see the sums which those thoughtless young lads, who have ten times more money than wit to guide it, throw away on useless *nigg-nyes*,* while thousands around them are pinched for the necessaries of life, it would make the very hair of your head, my dear Archy, stand up like the locks of Medusa.

'Before we left England, which, as I wrote to you at the time, Mr. N—— was advised to do on account of his health; I endeavoured to persuade him to go and drink goats whey among the healthful hills of the Highlands, where there are neither coughs, colds, nor shortness of breath, and where he could have lived like a king at a moderate expense; but he was prevailed on to try Italy, which has, to be sure, succeeded pretty well; but I am still in hopes that he will sometime or other make a visit to Scotland, for he always speaks with respect of our

* Nigg-nyes, or bawbles.

country, which the ignorant and worthless of the English never do.

'You desire my opinion of Italy and its inhabitants, which I shall now give you without prejudice or partiality. The Italians are a most ingenious people. I have been even tempted to think that there is something favourable to ingenuity in the very air or soil, or something else belonging to this happily-situated peninsula of Italy, for it became, in the first place, the seat of the empire of the world by the valour and address of its inhabitants; when I say the world, I mean all but the northern part of Great Britain, which the Romans were so far from subduing, that they were obliged to build walls and ramparts across the island; first, between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and next, from Carlisle to Newcastle, to defend themselves from our ancestors the Caledonians.

'But when the Roman empire was overturned by the Goths, Rome became the seat of a new kind of empire, and that is the empire of the popes. In short, the inhabitants of Italy first subdued mankind by open force; and secondly, by imposition and pawkry.* And after several ages of Gothic darkness, where does the light of knowledge first dawn again? Where do the arts first appear, and where are they carried to the greatest perfection? Why, in this same Italy. This looks, I say, as if there were something peculiarly favourable to ingenuity in this country. But whatever may be in that notion, with all the disadvantages to which they are exposed from a miserably bad government, the present race of Italians certainly are a civilized, discreet, sober people, not so frank as the French, nor yet so reserved as the English; but with more shrewdness of understanding perhaps than either.

'In the formation of statues and graven images they are supposed to surpass all the nations of Europe; for in our own country, you know, this occupation was never much encouraged, because, in the opinion of several seri-

* Pawkry, cunning.

ous Christians of the Presbyterian persuasion, it flies in the teeth of the second commandment.

'The Italians are fond of music to an astonishing, and even to an unwarrantable degree; the number of eunuchs which they employ at a great expense, is a pretty plain proof that they spare nothing to have their ears tickled; they even oblige them to sing in the very churches; yet surely they might find houses enough to keep concerts in without profaning the house of God.—What would you think, Archibald, of hearing a dozen of fiddlers playing in the High Church of Edinburgh before and after sermon on the Lord's day? I am sure it would shock you, as it did me, to a very great degree.

'Some people endeavour to defend this, saying, that it assists devotion, and a great deal of idle *clish-maclaiver** of the same kind; for my part I have no good opinion of that sort of devotion which a parcel of fiddlers can assist. And people may argue as they please, but assuredly fiddles are better contrived to promote dancing than either meditation or prayer. At the same time it must be confessed, that Italian music, when performed in a proper place and on proper occasions, is very delightful to hear; though the best of it never thrilled through my heart so pleasingly as the sweet melody of some of our own tunes.

'As to the vulgar notion, that the Scottish music was invented by David Rizzio, the Italian secretary to Queen Mary, it is contrary to history, to tradition, and to common sense; for nothing requires a greater degree of popularity, or would be a stronger proof of a man's being esteemed and universally admired in a country, than his forming the national taste in music; but Davy Rizzio, poor creature, was universally hated during the short time he lived in Scotland; and if any tunes had been known to be of his invention, that circumstance alone would have been sufficient to prevent their ever being sung or played in that country.

* Idle tittle tattle.

'You inquire also concerning the city of Naples compared with other places:—I will only say in a few words, that it is a large and populous town, pleasingly situated in the view of a spacious bay, little inferior in beauty to Loch Lomond itself. The houses are built of free stone, several stories high, so that it has a more lofty appearance than London, but not quite so sublime as Edinburgh.

'But it is not in the appearance of the fields, or of the cities, nor in the customs or genius of the inhabitants, that the country where you reside has the great advantage over this land of darkness, but in the important article of religion; which here consists almost entirely of external show and gewgawry, of bowings, courtesies, and various gesticulations, of fantastical dresses, processions, and other idle ceremonials, which are in no way connected with true piety, and altogether opposite to the simplicity of the gospel, which you, my dear friend, enjoy the inestimable privilege of hearing preached in its native purity and truth.—As for your high dignified clergy, their lordships, and their eminences, and his holiness himself, I have heard some of them perform, and if I may judge of the rest by those I have heard, they are mere pigmies upon pedestals, compared with the preachers you have an opportunity of hearing every Lord's day.

'Having now briefly touched upon most of the points you mention in your last letter, I must recommend the bearer to your friendly offices; his name is Andrew Carr, of the Carrs of the South, his father being a shoemaker in Selkirk; he came to this country in the service of an English gentleman, whom he was obliged to quit through the malice of the valet de chambre, who taking advantage of the young man's being overtaken with liquor on the last St. Andrew's day, turned him off, on the pretext of his being an habitual drunkard.

'He remained however at Naples, in expectation of being taken into the service of some other English gentleman, and being young, thoughtless, and of a canty*

* Cheerful.

turn of mind, he lived for some time very idly. When any of the English servants were allowed a day of pleasuring, as they call it, Andrew was sure to be of the party; and at this rate, all the money he received from his late master would soon have been *cast at the cocks*:*—but in the midst of this, he received a letter from his mother, at Selkirk, informing him of his father's death, by which she and his sister were reduced to great poverty and distress. This news made a most laudable alteration in the conduct of Carr; he shunned all those parties of which he had formerly been so fond. And when our Dick pressed him very much, saying, 'You used to be as fond of mirth and good wine as your neighbours;' Andrew shook his head, and replied, 'Gif I drink wine, Richard, my mother and sister must drink water;' and the very next day he called on me with forty dollars, which he desired me to pay to Mr. N——'s banker, for an order on a house at Edinburgh, to remit the value to his mother. Mr. N—— was so much pleased when he heard of this, that he doubled the remittance to Carr's mother, and also furnished him with money sufficient to defray the expense of his journey through France to Edinburgh, where, by my advice, he intends to establish himself as a dancing-master, being one of the best dancers of an English hornpipe, a Scottish jigg, or a strathspey, that I ever saw. It is a thousand pities that he continued so long at the shoemaking trade, because the constant stooping has given a roundness to his back and shoulders which hurts his air a little in dancing of a minuet; but he is to remain three weeks or a month at Paris to improve himself, which will remove that impediment.

'I desire, that you will put my namesake, little Geordy, to Mr. Carr's school, and I beg that you will assist him by your recommendation.

'I send by Mr. Carr two tortoise-shell snuff-boxes, one for you, and the other for Mr. Mackintosh; they are in the Neapolitan taste, only instead of their usual ornaments,

* Thrown away.

I caused the maker to inlay the first with a golden thistle, with the inscription, *Nemo me impune lacessit;* and the other with a cat rampant, which is the crest of the Mackintoshes, and the motto, *Touch not the cat bot* * *a glove.* I hope you will accept of them as small tokens of my friendship to you both. I send also a blue velvet bonnet as a new year's gift to little Geordy. I must now end this long letter, begging to be respectfully remembered to the laird of Clairvoky and his lady, to Mr. Hector Monro, and his cousin Æneas, to black Colin Campbell, and blind Saunders, and to all inquiring friends on the water of Enrick; and so my dear Archy, I remain your affectionate cousin,

'GEORGE BUCHANAN.'

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Dawson's Letter.

ALTHOUGH the baronet could not with propriety get a sight of the letter which Dawson had been so long and so carefully composing for the benefit of his friend Ben Jackson, we have had the good fortune to procure a copy, faithfully taken from the original; which is here inserted as a companion to the foregoing.—

A Monseer,
Monseer BENJAMIN JACKSON, che le Count de ———,
—— Shire.
Engliterr.

DEAR BEN,

Having received yours per course, this serves to let you know, that I am well and hearty, and so is Sir ——; but as for Mr. Steele, he had a fall from his horse in taking a very easy leap, which hurt him a little, but he is growing better, thank God, for he is as good a soul and as generous to servants as any alive:—it was all the

* Without.

horse's fault, *that* I must say in justice to Mr. Steele, who put more trust in this lazy toad than he deserved; being deceived by the owner, who pretended he was a very good leaper. Now to say the truth, I have not seen many tolerable horses fit for hunting in all this town; and as for the women, about which your sister Bess makes inquiry, they are all for the most part painted, at least their faces: then for the rest, they hardly ever nick their tails, I mean of the horses, for England is the only country for horses and women. I do not believe that all Paris can produce the like of Eclipse and your sister Bess.

Since you and your sister Bess desire it, I shall now write to you a little about the description of this here town and country. In my own private opinion, Paris is but a tiresome town to live in, for there is none of the common necessaries of life, as porter or good ale; and as for their beef, they boil it to rags. Wine to be sure is cheaper here, but not so strong and genuine as in London.

I have been at the French king's palace, which they call Versailles in their language; it is out of town, the same as Kew or Windsor is with our king. I went first and foremost to see the stables, which to be sure is very grand, and there they have some very good looking horses, especially English hunters: it grieved me to see so many of our own best subjects in the service of our lawful enemy, which to be sure the French king is.

We little think how many of our fellow-creatures are seduced from England to distant countries, and exposed to the worst of usage, from both the French and Spaniards; for none of them know how an English horse ought to be treated.

When I was at Versailles, I saw the dowfiness, which is all the same as the prince of Wales's wife with us; she is one of the prettiest women I have seen in France, being very fair and blooming, and more like an Englishwoman than a French, and not unlike your sister Bess, only her dress was different.

She rides like the ladies in England, with both her

legs on the same side of the horse; whereas I have seen many women since I came abroad ride on horseback like men, which I think a bad contrivance, and I am surprised their husbands permit it. But I am told the women here do whatever they please, for all over France 'the grey mare is the better horse.' Yet what contradicts this, and which I cannot account for, is what I heard my Lord D——'s butler tell yesterday; which is this, that by a law which he mentioned, but I have forgot its name, though it sounded something like a leek.—By that there law, he said, that no woman can be king in France; that is, he did not mean by way of a bull, for he is of English parentage, born at Kilkenny, but he meant that no woman can ever be queen in France, as our women in England are. As for instance, suppose the king has no sons, but only a daughter, then when the king dies, this here daughter, according to that there law, cannot be made queen, but the next near relation, provided he is a man, is made king, and not the last king's daughter, which to be sure is very unjust. But you will say, can there be no queen in France then? Yes, whoever the king marries is queen; and as long as her husband lives she may govern him, and rule the nation as much as she pleases; but when he dies, she is not permitted to rule any longer, except the next king pleases.

Now this shows, and you may tell your sister Bess so, that in spite of all the coaxing and courting which the French use to the women, yet they are false-hearted towards them at the bottom, and do not respect them so much as to the main point, as we English does; and yet one of those d—d Parlivoos will go farther with some women in a day, than an Englishman in a month—all owing to their impudence; for a common man has as much impudence in France as a man-midwife has in England. By the by, Ben, I wonder you allow Tournelle, my lord's French servant, to be so much with your sister Bess; he pretends to teach her the French cortillong, but who knows what sort of cortillongs he may try to teach

her; in my own opinion, old John Lancashere could teach her dancing as well, and this would be more decent for the reputation of her vertue; but you need not show this part of my letter to Bess, but make your own use of it.

I have seen the French horse-guards which they call jangdarms; the men are smart-looking young fellows enough, but the horses are poor washy things in comparison of our dragoons.

The Swiss guards are stout men, clothed in scarlet, the same as our soldiers; but they have moustaches on their lips like the rat-catcher in St. Giles's.

The French foot-guards are dressed in blue, and all the marching regiments in white, which has a very foolish appearance for soldiers; and as for blue regimentals, it is only fit for the blue horse or the artillery.

I believe the French army would have no great chance with our troops in a fair battle upon plain ground. It is lucky for the mounseers, that there is no road by land between Dover and Calais; but as it is, I wonder the king does not send some regiments by sea to take Paris, which could make no great resistance; for there is no walls round the town, and there would be a good deal of plunder.

But after all, I like Paris better than Naples, though it is so near Mount Vesuvius, which all strangers go to see, the same as they do St. Paul's, the Monument, and lions in the Tower of London: it is to be sure continually smoking and throwing out fiery ashes and other combustibles, such as none of our English mountains does. I went one night to the top of it with Mr. N——'s valet Buchanan, and one Duncan Targe, another Scotchman; I thought I should have been choked with the smoke and sulphurous smell. But as for Buchanan and Targe, it gave them no disturbance; the reason of which I take to be, that the Scotch are accustomed from their infancy to brimstone and bad smells in their own country. I do not say this by way of disparagement to them two, who are not bad kind of men—only a little proud; but of the Scotch in

general, who in my opinion ought to be restrained by act of parliament to their own country, otherwise I do believe, in my conscience, sooner or later, they will eat up old England.

I have sent unto you, by the bearer, a pappy mashee tobacco-box, and a dozen pair of gloves, for your sister Bess, who will also deliver to you this letter, which I have taken three days in writing, to oblige you and Bess; and I durst not write by the post, for if the French found this letter, they would take me up for a spy, and shut me up in the Bastile during my life; and in England I am told all foreign letters are opened by the ministry, in which case this might bring you into trouble, because of the box and gloves, which being counterband against the act of parliament, the king would be enraged if he knew of such a thing, which stands to reason, all smuggled goods being so much money out of his pocket.—All from dear Ben, with my kind love to your sister Bess, your servant to command,

THOMAS DAWSON.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

A Letter from the Baronet to the Honourable Mr. N——.

A FEW posts after the arrival of this packet, Mr. N—— received the following letter from his uncle.—

MY DEAR EDWARD, *Paris.*

I will now give you a little more of Carr the Scot, and the English seaman.—In consequence of Dawson's having mentioned to his master, that the latter seemed sickly, and was but very indifferently accommodated in lodgings, Steele had the humanity to do what I ought to have done, but which I confess I neglected. He sent a physician to visit him, who having given it as his opinion, that the young Englishman required nothing but rest and proper diet to re-establish his health, Mr. Steele then sent for the

landlord of the house where Carr and he were quartered, desiring that he would immediately give them a more convenient apartment, and let the young man have that particular diet which the doctor recommended; for all which he indemnified the man by an immediate advance of money, and sent a message to the sailor, that he wished to see him as soon as he could easily walk to the hotel, which was at no great distance from their inn.

Carr and Warren came together two days after receiving this message; the latter is a well-looking man, of about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age; he appeared emaciated, but is naturally of a stout constitution, and mends daily. He was desired to sit down, and he gave a short account of his disasters and long residence in Persia, in a modest and sensible manner.

But I leave you to imagine our surprise and pleasure, when in the course of the conversation we discovered that this sailor is brother to Lady Elizabeth's young friend Miss Warren; the same who went in a frigate as a midshipman to the East Indies the year before her father's death, and was supposed to have been lost in the passage, as neither the vessel nor any of the crew were afterwards heard of. You must remember Lady Elizabeth's relating those circumstances to you and to me at N—— house, one day after Miss Warren left the room, which she did on your mentioning an East India ship's having struck on a bank in going out of the Channel; and your aunt at the same time begged of you to be guarded in your discourse in that young lady's company, as every hint relative to naval engagements or shipwrecks was apt to rouse within her mind the painful recollection of her own family misfortunes. I will not attempt to describe young Warren's joy, on my informing him that I was acquainted with his sister, and that she was well and happily situated; nor how suddenly that joy was checked, when he inquired about his father. I answered, 'I had heard nothing of him very lately;' but the youth had observed, that Steele made a sudden involuntary movement

at the question, and he saw me look sorrowful when I made the answer. 'Alas,' cried he, wringing his hands, 'my father is dead—I shall never see him more.' We were silent, which rendered his suspicions certainty. The young man then burst into tears; after allowing them to flow for some time in silence, I told him that his father had died in battle, exerting himself gallantly in the cause of his country. The satisfaction which this communicated was visible through his tears; he made me repeat all the circumstances I knew, again and again. I shall never forget the emotion and ardour which appeared in the youth's countenance while he listened.—'My father,' cried he, with exultation, 'was a brave officer.' 'That he was,' said I.—'I had the honour of knowing him; his behaviour during the action in which he fell was praised, and his death regretted by the whole fleet.' The young man continued to shed tears.

Steele is a worthy fellow—I like him more and more; he took hold of Warren's hand, and was going to say something consolatory to him, but his voice failing he also burst into tears, and he only could utter the words *damn it*, while he hastily rubbed his eyes, in a kind of indignation, at finding himself crying. I said every thing that I imagined could sooth young Warren;—we ordered an apartment for him at our hotel;—poor Carr was exceedingly happy; he said he had always suspected that Mr. Warren was of genteel parentage, and even attempted to make an apology for some parts of his own behaviour which he thought had been too familiar. You may easily conceive how this was received by one of Warren's sensibility; he shook him by the hand, called him his benefactor, and said he would never forget what he owed to him. Carr however declared he knew what belonged to a gentleman and the son of an officer, and only desired leave to continue to attend him in the quality of a servant till his arrival in England; and notwithstanding all Warren could urge, he would remain with him on no other conditions.

I have prevailed on this young man to accept of my credit for what is immediately necessary for his decent equipment. All his misfortunes have not damped his fondness for his profession. He has no views nor hopes independent of it; and his most ardent wish after seeing his sister, is to return to his duty, in the hopes of promotion as an officer. Steele is wonderfully attached to him, and Warren seems to have the warmest esteem or most grateful affection for Steele; who is now so well that we think of leaving this in a few days, and in my next letter, I hope, will be dated from N—— house. God bless you, my dear Edward!

CHAPTER LXXV.

A second Letter from the Baronet to the Honourable Mr. N——.

Two or three weeks after this, Mr. N—— received another letter from his uncle, of which what follows is an extract.—

Our reception at N—— house was most joyful; Steele's mother and his uncle Transfer were both there when we arrived. The former flew with impatience into her son's arms before he had finished his compliments to your father and Lady Elizabeth. Transfer assured Steele as he shook him by the hand, that he was not so happy even at the peace, although he had then gained six thousand pounds by the rise of stock. While the mother, uncle, and nephew were entertaining each other, I presented young Warren to his sister. The tenderness of this scene exceeds my power of description; your father was moved even to tears, while Lady Elizabeth beheld it with a smile of serene satisfaction. I do not know how to account for this, for who is more alive to the feelings of humanity than her ladyship? Perhaps she had anticipated the meeting in her imagination; so that when it actually

took place, nothing happened but what she had foreseen; whereas your father was taken by surprise, or perhaps Lady Elizabeth's attention to support her young friend during this pathetic interview prevented her from being so much affected herself as she would otherwise have been.

'Young Warren behaved with great propriety, for his behaviour was natural. His first expressions were those of the most affectionate tenderness for his sister; his next, of gratitude to Lady Elizabeth and your father, for the parental kindness they had shewn to his orphan sister; the mention of which brought the recollection of their own father into the minds of both. The fine countenance of Miss Warren, bathed in tears, fell upon her brother's shoulder, while he, greatly agitated, was scarcely able to sustain her and himself.

'In this attitude they continued for some time in the midst of a group too much affected to give them any interruption.

'Miss Warren seeming to recover herself, and attempting to apologize to the company, Lady Elizabeth took her by the hand, and said, 'I beg you will come with me, my dear, I have something to say to you.' Then supporting Miss Warren with one hand, and drawing her brother after her with the other, she conducted both into another room. 'You must have many things to communicate in which you will be under restraint from the presence of even your best friends.' So saying, she left them together, and returned to the company.

'Mrs. Steele was inclined to have a *tête-à-tête* with her son; but Transfer, who observed her drawing him apart, opposed it, usless he were admitted of the party; he swore he loved his nephew as well as his sister could love her son, and he had no notion of allowing him to be seduced from him on the very day of his arrival.

'After Warren and his sister had been together about an hour, he called in Carr, whom the young lady was most desirous of seeing. She seems almost in love with

this fellow ever since her brother informed her of Carr's behaviour to him; and respects him so much for the goodness of his heart, that she cannot bear to hear him turned into ridicule on any account.

'I read Buchanan's letter the other day to your father and Lady Elizabeth. We laughed a little at an expression in it concerning Carr's air in dancing a minuet. Miss Warren did not quite relish the jest. I do in my conscience believe that had a man, with the face and person of the Belvidere Apollo, neglected her brother in his distress, no future attention to herself could have made this young lady respect him so much as she does this poor fellow.

'The enthusiastic affection of Miss Warren for her brother bodes well for our friend Steele, who is her passionate admirer as much as ever; and if I am not greatly mistaken, the lady views him already in a different light from what she did before he went abroad. I am so much convinced of this, that I have ventured to give Steele some encouraging hints to that purpose. Your father also wishes him to renew his addresses, and I am certain that Steele's heart prompts him to the same; his natural diffidence, however, joined to the abhorrence he has for importuning any body, have hitherto restrained him; he derives little encouragement from Miss Warren's affable behaviour to him, which he entirely imputes to complaisance for her brother, whose friendship for Steele increases daily. But in my opinion, independent of all consideration of her brother, the damsel herself now views honest Steele with other eyes than she did formerly. Indeed both your father and Lady Elizabeth declare that he is improved in many respects by his travels. Possibly you may lay claim to part of the honour of this, for I believe you were his only *ami de voyage*. Adieu, my dear Edward. I rejoice in the accounts of your continued good health, and hope you will stay no longer abroad than the time requisite for confirming it, so as that you may never again need to quite Old England on that account.'

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Prudent Conduct of Laura.

It is now full time to return to Laura, from whom the reader may perhaps think we have been absent too long. When we left her, she had prevailed on Signora Sporza to write to Carlostein, and had seen his answer, wherein he gave assurances not to give the least hint to his friend Captain Seidlits of the ill-footing on which Zeluco and his sister were. After the discovery made by the maid to Signora Sporza, it was no longer in Laura's power to adhere to the plan she had formed, by avoiding conversations with Signora Sporza on a topic which she introduced as often as they were together by themselves. And in the course of those conversations Signora Sporza made no scruple of giving it as her opinion, that Laura ought not to submit herself to the caprices and ill-humour of a man she did not love, and whom it was impossible she ever should; one, whose love for her was already exhausted, and which, if it should ever return, must, now that his true character had developed itself, prove a curse, not a blessing to his wife: the best measure which Laura could adopt therefore, was to inform her mother and brother of the true state of the case, and to separate, on the best terms they could procure, from her husband for ever.

Nothing was more earnestly desired by Laura than a separation upon any terms from Zeluco; but as this could not be done without informing her mother of the misery of her situation, she could not bear to give a parent, for whom she felt the most tender affection, the remorse of thinking that *she* had been the most active cause of her child's misery. She was also afraid of her brother, whom she knew to be of a temper to call her husband to a severe account for his conduct towards her, the consequences of which in every point of view appeared to her dreadful; a third consideration, it is probable, had some weight with her—she had reason to believe she was with child.

Laura, therefore, insisted firmly with Signora Sporza to be allowed to judge for herself in this particular, and convinced her that she should be highly offended if Signora Sporza gave the least hint of the terms on which she was with her husband to her brother, or any other person. What had already happened, however, made Carlostein an exception; and Signora Sporza indemnified herself for the restraint she was obliged to use to others by speaking her sentiments very freely to him, even in the presence of Laura, on this subject, which now engrossed her thoughts.

Notwithstanding the precautions which Laura took to keep her mother from the knowledge of what would give her too much uneasiness, if that lady had not been a little dazzled by the glitter of magnificence which appeared in the equipages and domestic establishment of Zeluco, and flattered by his specious behaviour to herself, she would have discovered that her daughter was unhappy. With regard to Captain Seidlits, he thought his sister so very amiable in all respects, that it never entered into his mind that the man who possessed her, and who could have no motive but love for his original attachment to her, did not think himself happy in the acquisition; and although it sometimes occurred to him, from the pensive and melancholy air of his sister, that she might not be so very fond of her husband as could be wished, he considered that as a misfortune which she had in common with many women, and for which there was no remedy; and he turned his thoughts from it as from an idea which if indulged could only plague himself, without being of service to his sister.

It has been already remarked, that the many fine qualities and accomplishments which Laura possessed, and which would have fixed the esteem and affection of a man of worth and sentiment, had little attraction for the jaded senses and corrupt taste of Zeluco, who sought in venal beauty and in variety a relief from *ennui*, and its never-failing companion ill-humour; but all those palliations, instead of diminishing were found to augment the incur-

able disease under which this wretched man laboured; who, when he became unsupportable to himself, often endeavoured to exhaust the virulence which corroded his own breast upon her, who, before she knew him, had never known what *ennui* or ill-humour was.

Distressing, however, as his ill-temper was, it did not seem so dreadful in the eyes of his wife, as the returns of fondness with which he was occasionally seized; and sometimes, from unaccountable caprice, those fits of fondness would come immediately after he had been insulting her with the most unprovoked ill usage. An attachment, therefore, which Zeluco formed about this time, and which was considered as a source of great affliction to his wife, proved in reality one of the most comfortable incidents to her that had occurred since her marriage.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Nerina.

—— genus huic materna superbum
Nobilitas dabat, incertum de patre ferebat. VIRG.

Two ladies had lately arrived at Naples; one of them an elderly woman, the other about three or four and twenty, and of uncommon beauty. The account given of them by the banker on whom they had a credit, and which was supported by letters to individuals at Naples, was, that the youngest had a moderate fortune in her own possession, on which she lived in a genteel and independent manner, and had come to pass a few months at Naples, that she might enjoy the benefit of a purer air than that of Rome; that the elder lady was aunt to the younger, and the widow of an officer; that she was in reduced circumstances, and dependent on her niece.

Such was the account given of those two ladies, whose real history was as follows.—

The young one, whose name was Nerina, was the off-

spring of a secret amour between an unmarried woman of family in Genoa, and a musician. The affair had been hushed up; the lady being delivered at the house of a female relation in the country, the infant given to the wife of a peasant to suckle, and the father retiring to Venice, where he lived on the profits of his profession, and on the money which he received from the child's mother. His demands became more exorbitant than it was in her power to satisfy; he wrote menacing letters, but no threats could procure from her or her relations what satisfied the rapacity of the musician; on which he formed a scheme to carry away the child from the peasant's cottage, and convey her to his own house at Venice. He succeeded in his project by the connivance of the maid who had the care of the child. Having this pledge in his hands, he imagined that the mother or her relations would be more solicitous to furnish him with money: it happened otherwise; the unhappy mother retired to a convent, where in a short time she was seized with a fever, of which she died. After this her relations set the musician at defiance, and gave themselves no farther trouble about him or the child. The musician was a man of the most profligate principles and manners; he lived with a woman of the same character, who was a singer at the opera. With this couple Nerina was educated; she had a pretty good voice, and promised to be remarkably handsome. They expected that in a short time the circumstances of the family would be greatly augmented by a proper use of both; but Nerina was not of a disposition to share the profits arising from her personal accomplishments with any person whatever; at the age of fifteen therefore she abandoned her father's house, and the territories of the republic, in company with a Venetian nobleman. She was acquainted with the circumstances of her own birth; and although in her disposition she had more affinity with her father than with her unfortunate mother, yet in conversation she seemed to consider herself as descended from her mother alone, and never mentioned her father, more than

if she had not known of his existence. She lived with the Venetian, till his flow of money, which was considerable at the beginning of their connection, began to ebb; she then left him for a young Englishman, with whom she embarked in a high tide of fortune, and at last quitted him for the same reason that she had quitted the Venetian. She afterwards established herself at Rome, and wishing to acquire a decent character, she took an elderly woman into her service, who she pretended was a relation of her mother's, and lived for some time with as much affected modesty as a great deal of natural impudence would permit.

It is said that people are apt through life to set too great a value on those things which they have found it difficult to procure in their youth, and too little on those to which they have been accustomed. Nerina had been bred in a family in which there was a great scarcity of money, and a profusion of what is sometimes, however improperly, called love. Whether it was owing to this, or from whatever cause it proceeded, certain it is, that Nerina, in all her dealings, showed the utmost attention to the former, and made very little or no account of the other.

While Nerina lived in this *decent* style at Rome, she was protected by a certain cardinal, who sometimes saw her in secret, and by whose friendship she flattered herself that she should be enabled to pass the rest of her life without having need of other protectors; but before she could get matters arranged to her satisfaction, an accident happened to the cardinal, which according to his own calculation should not have happened for several years, and which Nerina did not wish for till the arrangements above mentioned had taken place. The cardinal died the day after he had passed an evening with Nerina, during which he had been more profuse than ever of his expressions of *friendship*.

Nerina was so violently affected by this premature accident, that, in her rage, she could not abstain from many a-

busive expressions against his eminence, for having so long delayed what she thought it was his duty to have performed; but her passion subsiding by degrees, she at length mustered up all her philosophy, which directed her, without farther loss of time, to have recourse to several protectors to indemnify her for her loss of one of the cardinal's importance.

Among those was a young man of a noble family of Milan, who became desperately in love with her, and for whom she affected a reciprocal flame, but with this difference, that the young man's continued to burn with undiminished fervour after the fuel which fed Nerina's was quite exhausted. As soon as she perceived that his money was gone, and understood that he had but distant hopes of a fresh supply, a chilling alteration seemed to take place in the bosom of Nerina; and the youth, instead of smiles and caresses, was received with formality and cold politeness.

The imprudent youth, unable to bear this kind of behaviour from a person who commanded all his affection, proposed marriage as the only recompense he could make to her, now that his finances were exhausted.

This offer made an immediate impression on the mind, and some alteration on the behaviour of Nerina; but after weighing every circumstance, and balancing the advantages and disadvantages of closing with the proposal, she concluded that it would be attended with more trouble than she was willing to bestow, and more risk than she chose to run. She therefore fell on means, without appearing to have given the information, of acquainting her lover's relations that he had got into bad company at Rome, and that if he were not removed immediately, he was in danger of taking an irretrievable step of the most fatal consequence to his honour and happiness. She amused the youth himself with evasive answers, till one of his relations arrived at Rome, with peremptory orders from his father, for his immediate return to Milan; which the young man with infinite reluctance at length

obeyed, after mutual oaths of eternal love, and many tears on his part as well as that of Nerina, whose agent received a liberal recompense for the intelligence.

The young man being thus disposed of, and Nerina having a desire to see Naples, she did not think those acquaintance whom she had occasionally seen, unknown to her Milanese lover, and to each other, of importance enough to induce her to baulk her fancy.

She went accordingly, and established herself with her pretended aunt, in the manner that has been mentioned.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Il y a dans la jalousie plus d'amour propre que d'amour.
ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO accidentally meeting with Nerina, was sufficiently touched with her face and figure, to wish to cultivate her acquaintance. He found no unsurmountable obstacle to this; but Nerina, knowing him to be a man of great fortune, thought it worth her while to use all her powers of attraction, which, particularly to a man of Zeluco's character, were very strong, till by degrees she cherished what was only a transient desire into a violent passion.

He wished however to conceal his connection with Nerina from his wife and her relations; and although he visited her very frequently, it was always in secret, so that their intimacy might have remained much longer unknown, had all the world taken as little pains to discover it as Laura and her relations. But Laura received two letters in one day, both from unknown and *sincere friends*, giving her a faithful account of her husband's intimacy with Nerina; and explaining how she might detect it. One of those friends was a woman with whom Zeluco had intrigued, and who took this step to be revenged of him for his infidelity; the other was a lady who suspected that her husband was fond of Laura, and hated her on that account, although well convinced that

he would not succeed. It would have been mortifying to those two benevolent creatures, had they known how very little their intelligence affected Laura. She was in the act of throwing their letters into the fire when her husband entered the room.—'You seem very eager to burn those letters,' said he.—'Their contents are of a nature too indifferent for me to be eager about them,' replied she.—'Pray, who are they from, if it be not a secret?' added he.—'It *is* a secret?' said she.—'Indeed!' said he, snatching one of the letters that was not consumed from the fire, 'may *I* be admitted as a confident?'—'You had better not read it,' said Laura, coolly, and without attempting to take it from him.—'Why so?' said he.—'Because,' replied she, 'the contents will be as little satisfactory to you as the method of obtaining them is honourable.'

'So you are afraid of my reading it,' said he.—'I have no fears on the subject,' replied Laura, walking towards the door.

'Stay, madam,' cried Zeluco, who knew the hand, and having observed the name of Nerina in the letter, suspected the contents; 'I have no intention to read this scroll, only your affecting not to know from whom it came, surprised me.'—'It is no affectation, I have not the least notion,' said Laura.—'What then, they were both anonymous?'—'They were,' added she.—'Some jest, I suppose,' said he, throwing the letter again into the fire, 'or perhaps some piece of malice.'—'Very possibly,' said she, and left the room.

While Zeluco had held the half-consumed letter in his hand, he recognised the writing of the lady with whom he himself had intrigued. Knowing the jealousy of her disposition, and perceiving Nerina's name in the middle of the letter, he immediately suspected its contents; and *albeit, unused to the blushing mood*, he underwent something approaching to it, on perceiving that he had betrayed unjust suspicions of his wife, at the very instant that she received information of his own infidelity.

For some time after this incident, Zeluco behaved with more attention to Laura, and affected a greater share of good humour than was natural to him, while she shewed no symptom of being in any degree affected by the intelligence conveyed in the anonymous letters; nor did she ever after by any allusion or hint revive the recollection

In the meanwhile Mr. N—— prevailed on Captain Seidlits to make a tour with him into the two Calabrias, and other parts of the kingdom of Naples, Carlostein having declined to accompany them, saying, as he was to remain in Italy after Seidlits, he would postpone it. Zeluco became daily more intoxicated with Nerina; she almost continually occupied his thoughts, and engrossed the greatest part of his time, so that Laura was left at more freedom and in greater tranquillity than she had ever enjoyed since her marriage.

Her husband's vanity with regard to her was considerbly abated, so that he no longer insisted, as he had done formerly, on her appearing at every assembly and public place; he was better pleased that she should remain at home at her mother's, or Signora Sporza's, while he was passing his time with Nerina, and of course being missed from assemblies, it might be believed that he was keeping his wife company.

Laura's society at this period therefore was confined to her mother, Signora Sporza, and Carlostein; the latter she saw almost every day, and frequently had opportunities of conversing with him alone at the house of Signora Sporza. This too indulgent friend being exceedingly affected at the settled gloom which she well saw had overspread the mind of Laura, and which she thought the company and conversation of Carlostein alone had the power of dissipating, contrived frequent means of bringing them together; and this she did with such address, that they seemed to happen by accident, and without any previous arrangement on her part. Nothing could be more imprudent than the conduct of Signora Sporza, in

leading her young friend into such slippery situations, which she did however from no other inducement than the pleasure she took in seeing Laura pleased and in good spirits; as for Zeluco, she thought he richly deserved the worst that could happen, for, in her opinion, he had already put it out of his wife's power to do him injustice; but there is one consideration, which, had it occurred to Signora Sporza, would have made her act very differently from what she did; and that is, the effect that any essential ill-conduct would have had on the mind of Laura herself. Signora Sporza did not reflect that had this been the case, no alleviation from peculiar circumstances, no provocation on the part of her husband, no certainty of concealment, and no consideration of whatever kind, could have made a woman of Laura's disposition forgive herself, or could have restored her that peace of mind without which happiness cannot exist.

It must be owned that the virtue of few women was ever placed in a more perilous situation than that of Laura, when it is considered that she had a fixed and well-grounded aversion for her husband, constantly kept alive by fresh provocations; for she was by turns teased by his caprices, abused by his unprovoked rage, insulted by his groundless jealousies, and stimulated by his infidelity: while a most amiable and accomplished man, for whom she could not help feeling a great partiality, was desperately in love with her, and with whom she had frequent opportunities of being alone.

She received a second letter from one of her anonymous correspondents, informing her, that her husband and one of his associates, with Nerina, who was also to have a companion, had formed a party to pass a few days at Casserta and other places, and were to set out that very day. Laura was as little affected by this letter as the former; she threw it into the fire, and thought no more of it.

That very day, Zeluco, without the shadow of provocation, but in the mere wantonness of caprice, behaved to her in the most insolent and brutal manner, telling her,

'that her *favourite*,' meaning the nobleman who had the squabble with Carlostein, 'had abandoned her, and set out for Venice, and he supposed *that* was the cause of her low spirits: on her keeping silence, he told her that her silence proceeded from insolence and pride.'

'You are mistaken,' said Laura; 'I never was insolent, and I never had less reason to be proud; I was silent from contempt of an accusation which I cannot think you yourself believe to have any foundation.'

'Contempt!' cried Zeluco, fiercely.

'Contempt of a groundless accusation,' replied Laura.

'Your contempt is affected, madam,' said Zeluco; 'but your melancholy is real.'

'My melancholy is indeed real,' said Laura, bursting into tears.

After uttering some shocking observations on her being so much affected, and the supposed cause, he said, 'I am going to the country for a few days, madam, and leave you to mourn that your minion is not at hand to comfort you during my absence.'

CHAPTER LXXIX.

The Portrait.

Laura gave free way to the fulness of her sorrow for a considerable time after her husband left her, but at last, fearing that her mother might call and observe the traces of affliction on her countenance, she went to Signora Sporza's, that she might have time to recover herself, in some degree, before she should meet with Madam de Seidlits.

The servant did not know that the baron Carlostein was with his mistress; he therefore told Laura that Signora Sporza was alone, and immediately introduced her into the room where she found them conversing together.

'I have just been telling the baron, my dear,' said Signora Sporza to Laura as she entered, 'that I have a let-

ter to write, I beg therefore you will entertain him till I return.'

Carlostein perceived the marks of anguish which the last scene with her husband had left on the countenance of Laura; and he conjectured rightly respecting the cause. Without asking a question, or uttering a syllable, his countenance expressed a thousand tender inquietudes on her account. After a considerable silence, he at length said, 'Would to heaven, madam, it were in my power to alleviate your sorrow, or contribute in any degree to your happiness.'

'*My* happiness!' repeated Laura, raising her spread hands, and throwing up her eyes to heaven.

'Yes, madam,' cried Carlostein with great emotion; '*your* happiness, which is dearer to me than my own, or rather which, more than any personal concern, *is* my own.'

'Ah! why,' said Laura, should your fair prospects be obscured by the tempests in which mine——;' here she checked herself, and then added, 'my thoughts are disturbed, sir, I am not well.—I know not what I say.'

'I have long dreaded,' said Carlostein, 'that you were not fortunate in all your connections; but you are blessed in some beyond the usual lot; you have the best of mothers, a brother who adores you, and friends who would cheerfully expose themselves to every fatigue and danger to serve you.'

'My brother, sir,' said Laura, 'first taught me to value his friend; I learned the lesson in my childhood, and it were vain for me to affect not being pleased with the interest you take in me; but a series of unlucky incidents has involved me in a net of misery from which the endeavours of all my friends cannot disentangle me.—Happiness and tranquillity are fled far from me,—I attempt not to recover what is beyond my grasp.' Here she burst into a fresh flood of tears, and Carlostein had bathed her hand with his, while in the excess of her despair she was insensible that he had hold of it. He attempted to comfort her by every suggestion that could convey hope or consolation.

—'No!' exclaimed she; 'death must be my only comforter; there is no hope for so complete a wretch as I am, but in the grave;—and miserable creature that I am,' resumed she, after a pause, 'I cannot without reluctance even wish for that last refuge of the miserable; how can I have the heart to wish for ease to myself, knowing as I do, that it cannot be obtained but at the expense of my poor mother, who would be left a prey to remorse, horror, and despair.'

Carlostein then in the most sympathising manner, and with all the eloquence of passion, declared the highest esteem and attachment to her; that he would consider it as the greatest honour and happiness he could ever enjoy to attempt whatever could tend to her ease or satisfaction; that he esteemed fortune, and life itself, as valuable only inasmuch as they should enable him to serve *her*, whose happiness was far dearer to him than life.

'Alas!' cried Laura, 'the completion of my misery is the being sensible that you can be of no service to me. I am convinced that your generous friendship would excite you to exertions of difficulty and danger in my favour; but I am in that hopeless state, that my best friends, those united to me by blood, as well as those attached by sentiment, must struggle equally in vain to free me from the horrid rock of misery to which I am fixed by chains which no earthly hand can break.'

'Accursed chains!' cried Carlostein, 'they were forged in hell, and ought not to bind an angel!'

'They will ever bind me,' said Laura.

'O loveliest and dearest of women!' cried Carlostein, with enthusiasm; 'why did I not know you sooner; often did I hear the praises of the accomplished Laura Seidlits—whom I had only seen in childhood; but could I imagine there was such perfection, such elegance, such soul-subduing loveliness, united in woman.'

Declarations of this nature, uttered with all the energy of truth and passion, by a graceful and amiable man, for whom she had the warmest friendship, at a time when she

was full of indignation at the brutal behaviour of a hated husband, could not fail to make a lively impression on the heart of Laura, endued with exquisite sensibility, and formed for friendship and love.

'Why did not your brother and I,' exclaimed Carlostein, 'follow you to Italy sooner?—Why did we loiter at Berlin and Vienna while the fiends were weaving this web of wretchedness?—O! would to heaven we had hurried directly to Naples!'

'Would you had!' said Laura, in a languid voice.

'Bless you—bless you, my angel, for that wish!' cried Carlostein, encircling her waist with his arms.

In this situation Laura seemed for a short time to have lost the power of recollection; but raising her eyes, they met the portrait of her father, which hung on the opposite wall of the room.—She gave a sudden scream, and struggled to get free.

'What is the matter, my angel?' said Carlostein.

'Ah! loose me;—unhand me, sir?' cried she with a voice of terror, and sprung from his yielding arms.

'What terrifies you?' said he.

'Look there!' cried she, pointing to the portrait.

'I see a picture,' said Carlostein.

'I see an angry father,' said Laura, with a trembling voice.

Carlostein then endeavoured to sooth and calm her spirits by the most endearing expressions; but as often as he approached her, she moved from him, and entreated him to be gone.

'If I have offended you,' cried he, 'most earnestly do I beg your forgiveness.'

'I cannot forgive myself,' replied Laura.

'In what are you to blame, angel of purity?' exclaimed he.

'Leave me; O leave me!' repeated she; 'it is not meet for us to be thus together.—Pray withdraw.'

'When shall I see you again?' said Carlostein, in a plaintive voice.

'You shall hear from me soon,' answered she; 'but at present, if you have any esteem for me, leave me.'

Carlostein retired, and Laura, turning to the portrait of her father, continued for a considerable time contemplating it with earnestness, and then exclaimed, 'Blessed effigy of one to whom honour was dearer than life, how much am I beholden to you!'

When Signora Sporza returned, she seemed surprised at the absence of Carlostein. Laura said, he was obliged to go, and immediately turned the discourse to other subjects.

The two following days Carlostein found no opportunity of seeing Laura; being uneasy at the idea of having offended her, he told Signora Sporza that he was afraid her friend had misunderstood some part of his conduct which he wished to explain, and begged she would deliver a letter for that purpose, as he was unwilling to send it by a servant.

Signora Sporza complied with his request, and the next day presented him with the following answer from Laura.

'TO THE BARON CARLOSTEIN,

'The uneasiness you express at the idea of my being displeased with you, may now be at an end.—I never thought you capable of any formed plan inconsistent with my honour. But I am sensible that the pleasure I took in your conversation, and in the thoughts of your friendship, has led me into improprieties and dangers which a prudent and virtuous woman should avoid.

'The ties by which I am bound to my husband are sacred, however miserable they render me. Although his behaviour deprives him of my esteem, it cannot justify my ill-conduct.

'Having said this, you cannot, with reason, blame the resolution I have taken, never again to meet you alone. I am persuaded, my cousin Sporza would not have permitted such meetings if she had not a higher opinion of me than I deserve.

'It will be vain for you to endeavour to prove the innocence or safety of our meeting as formerly; the only effect of such an attempt would be to diminish the good opinion I entertain of you.

'Adieu! and may heaven bless you! Every proof of regard and confidence, consistent with duty, you may always expect from the wretched

'LAURA.'

CHAPTER LXXX.

——Miseri quibus
Intentata nites. Hor.

However vexed Carlostein was at the thoughts of being deprived of the pleasure of seeing Laura as formerly, he was too well convinced of the propriety of her conduct, and too much afraid of losing her good opinion, to make any immediate attempt to prevail on her to alter it.

He immediately signified, in a letter which Signora Sporza delivered to her, his gratitude for the friendship with which she honoured him; adding, that although he perceived not any danger in the meetings which she had determined to discontinue, yet he acquiesced in her decision, and would conform himself in that, and in every thing else, to her pleasure.

He saw her occasionally, however, at her own house, where he was frequently invited by Zeluco; and as, after the scene at Signora Sporza's, Laura's behaviour to Carlostein was a little more constrained than usual, Zeluco was more and more convinced that his wife struggled in vain to conceal the dislike she had to him.

It is probable that he would have discovered his mistake in this particular, had not his mind been engrossed by his passion for Nerina, for whom he had taken a little villa at some distance from Naples, where his visits, he imagined, would be less observed than while she lived in town.

The symptoms of pregnancy became apparent on Lau-

ra, which rendered the retirement she loved more expedient than ever; and as Zeluco was seldom at home, she was for several months almost entirely relieved from his jealousy, ill-humour, and fondness.

In truth, Nerina had as little affection for Zeluco as Laura had; but it was much easier for the one to feign sentiments which she had not, than the other; the first had been reared from her infancy in the school of simulation; in her all the alluring tricks of educated artifice were engrafted on a disposition naturally fraudulent. The other was habituated to truth; had she been inclined to dissemble, she must have failed from want of practice. And if both had been equally mistresses of deceit, still Nerina would have had the easier task in affecting to love Zeluco; she only had to get the better of indifference, whereas Laura had to overcome aversion.

Zeluco had, from the hour of his marriage, observed extreme coldness in Laura; and although, from a very short period after their union, he had never been able so far to overcome the natural sulkiness of his character as to make a fair trial to gain her affection, yet he considered her want of it as a crime; for self-love made him think it impossible that a woman should be cold to him, who was not capriciously prepossesed in favour of another.

Nerina had two objects in view: the one was to persuade Zeluco that Laura was attached to another man; the other, that she herself was desperately fond of him. She had hitherto found no plausible opportunity of insinuating the first, but she endeavoured to convince him of the second by ten thousand little attentions, by flattering fits of jealousy, by occasional resistance, and other allurements, which she well knew how to vary opportunely; she had already drawn very considerable sums of money from him, and had acquired such an ascendency over him as she hoped to improve into a complete and absolute sway.

If Zeluco happened to dine for two days successively at home, or to mention Laura with any degree of respect,

he was sure soon after to find Nerina in apparent languor and ostentatious dejection of spirits: when questioned by him on the cause, she sighed, affected to hide her tears, and begged that he would not inquire into the cause of that for which she had too much reason to fear there was no remedy. On being farther urged, she would sob, shiver, and fall into a convulsive faint; and when she had performed this with admirable nicety of action, she seemed to recover, and after a fresh discharge of tears, lamented the severity of her fate, in being passionately fond of a man who, after the sacrifice she had made, preferred another to her; and what was still more mortifying, one who hated and despised him.

At other times she insinuated that his wife's relations formed a cabal to manage him entirely; that they had already taken advantage of the easy generosity of his temper, and prevailed on him to settle a large portion of his fortune on her and her children, and had plans of carrying their rapacious views still farther, so that in a short time he would be little more than a factor on his own estate.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

The Displeasure of Captain Seidlits;—the Distress of Laura;—the Prudence of Carlostein,—and good Sense of Mr. N——.

Sometime after Seidlits returned from his tour he heard of this connexion with Nerina, and perceived, with an indignation which he could ill suppress, that Zeluco had not the same degree of attention for Laura that he formerly displayed.

Captain Seidlits dropt some expressions to that effect in the presence of his sister. She was alarmed at the consequence of his harbouring such a suspicion, and endeavoured to remove it; but fearing that she had not succeed-

ed, she earnestly begged that he would not ruin her mother's peace by mentioning his suspicion to her.

'It is not to your mother, but to your husband, I mean to talk on the occasion,' said he.

Laura then endeavoured to convince him of the impropriety of his interfering undesired between man and wife; adding, that she was sensible of the fraternal interest he took in whatever concerned her; that it was her pride and happiness to have such a friend and protector, and that she would apply to him freely when she needed his interposition.

Laura was so distrustful of her brother's temper, that she renewed her remonstrunces frequently on this subject. It happened once or twice that Zeluco entered the room on these very occasions, and she remarked with great pain, that Seidlits could with difficulty conceal his feelings, and that he returned the civilities of the other in a very cold manner.

This increased her fears so much, that, in the presence of Signora Sporza, she acquainted Carlostein with the cause of her uneasiness, and entreated him to watch over his friend, and endeavour to dissuade him from a conduct fraught with the most dismal consequences. Carlostein expressed his satisfaction at the confidence which she placed in him, and promised to do every thing in his power to prevent what she dreaded.

Carlostein soon after happened to meet his friend Seidlits walking by himself, and ruminating on the various instances he had observed of neglect or ill-usage on the part of Zeluco towards Laura.

'You seem thoughtful, my friend,' said Carlostein; 'something vexes you.'

'Something does vex me,' said Seidlits.

'You do not intend then, I hope, that it should be a secret to me.'

'No certainly.—This Zeluco, I fear, does not use my sister as she deserves.'

'I do not know who could,' said Carlostein.

'He seems to be of a sulky, ill temper,' said Seidlits.

'If that be the case, it is a misfortune to all who are connected with him,' replied Carlostein, 'but most of all to himself.'

'But it ought to be a misfortune to himself only,' said Seidlits, 'not to her who has the sweetest temper on earth; and I am determined that his ill-humour shall not make my sister unhappy.—The same world shall not contain me and the man who behaves ill to Laura Seidlits.—I'll tell him so this very day.'

'Have you any particular instance of ill usage to complain of?' said Carlostein.

'Why there is this woman,' replied Seidlits, 'this Nerina, with whom he passes so much of his time; *that* must be mortifying to my sister, and shows what a brute he is; and besides, his general manner to her is not kind and attentive as it ought to be, and as it shall be, *that* I am determined on.'

'My dear Seidlits,' said Carlostein, 'what answer do you think you would give to any man who should tell you, that he did not approve of your keeping company with a particular woman, and that you ought to behave with more attention and kindness to your wife.'

'Well, if any man did speak to me in that manner, I should certainly give him satisfaction one way or other.'

'That kind of satisfaction is easily given,' said Carlostein; 'but your object is to promote your sister's happiness.'

'My sole object!' replied Seidlits.

'How would it be promoted should you fall?' said Carlostein.

'Why, that kind of reasoning might be applied with equal justness, if I should demand satisfaction of the man who pulled me by the nose. You might ask what satisfaction I should receive in case I myself should fall. In short,' continued Seidlits, 'this is not an affair of reasoning, but of feeling; and, by Heavens! this fellow shall not behave improperly to *my* sister.'

'Since it is entirely an affair of feeling,' replied Carlostein, 'some regard should be paid to the feelings of her who is chiefly concerned. Has your sister ever complained of her husband, or given you any hint of his having treated her ill?'

'You know,' replied Seidlits, 'of what heavenly mildness her disposition is; she will bear much without complaining.'

'But as she has never mentioned any thing in the nature of complaint to you,' said Carlostein, 'it is possible that part of what you suspect is groundless; and if she has reason to complain of some things, it is probable that she considers them of far less moment than what she would suffer by your quarrelling with her husband. On the whole, it is clear that you ought to have a little patience, till it is more evident that your suspicions are well founded, and then I shall be happy to concur with you in taking the most likely measures for your sister's relief.'

Although Seidlits remained convinced that his sister had cause to complain of her husband's conduct, yet Carlostein at length obtained his promise that he would not speak on the subject to Zeluco, without first acquainting his friend.

When Carlostein gave an account of this conversation to Laura, notwithstanding his softening some parts of it, she continued exceedingly apprehensive of some fatal scene between her husband and brother. She again mentioned her apprehensions to Carlostein in the presence of Signora Sporza, and knowing that it was part of their plan to visit Sicily before their return to Germany, she expressed her wishes that Carlostein would prevail on her brother to set out with him immediately.

As at this time Laura's spirits were much dejected, and as she found in the company of her brother and Carlostein the only cordial which could raise or support them, nothing but the affection which she had for her brother, and the dread of his being involved in a quarrel with her

husband, could have enabled her to resist the arguments which the baron could not help urging against their leaving Naples till she should recover from her lying-in, and in this he was assisted by Signora Sporza.

Laura's own inclinations were on the same side with the eloquence of Carlostein, yet she had the firmness to persevere in her request that they would depart; she even used the circumstance of her being soon to be confined as a fresh argument: 'For since during my confinement I cannot see my friends at any rate,' said she, 'it is best that you seize that interval for your tour; and by the time you return, I shall be sufficiently well to enjoy your company.'

Carlostein therefore gave up the point, and prevailed on Seidlits to adopt the measure which his sister had proposed; 'For you must recollect,' said he to Captain Seidlits, 'the present state of your sister's health; whatever you may *ultimately* resolve on therefore, every altercation between you and Zeluco must be avoided at present, as you would avoid her destruction.'

Their journey was agreed on; Mr. N——, who had talked of accompanying them, was prevented; but he supped in company with them and Signora Sporza at Madame de Seidlits's the night preceding their departure. Laura endeavoured to be cheerful, partly to hide her concern for the absence of Carlostein, and partly to convince her brother, that she was not so unhappy as he imagined. The effort was superior to her strength of mind; for although she bid adieu to her brother with composure, she trembled and turned pale when Carlostein took leave of her. This was observed by Mr. N——, who stood near him; and it was not the first time that he had remarked Laura's partiality for the baron—which had no other effect on the generous mind of this gentleman, than increasing the regard he had for Carlostein. His own attachment to Laura had never exceeded the limits of friendship and high esteem; he had from their first acquaintance endeavoured to guard against a passion for a

woman of a different country and religion from his own. Had Laura betrayed any symptoms of affection for him, it is more than probable his precautions would have been vain; for when a man approves greatly of a woman's character and person, nothing is so likely to kindle approbation into love, as his imagining that love already exists within her breast towards him. But Mr. N—— was too free from vanity, and had too much discernment, not to perceive that Laura's regard for him was unmixed with passion; and the same discernment enabled him to perceive that her attachment to Carlostein was pure love.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

> Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes,
> Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise.
>
> Pope.

The morning on which he left Naples, Captain Seidlits called once more on his sister. She had passed an unquiet night, dejection and sorrow were strongly marked on her countenance. Seidlits was affected in a manner unusual to him; while he embraced her, on taking leave, tears were in the eyes of both. Zeluco unexpectedly entered the room at that instant: Seidlits was fretted, and confused at this intrusion; he was abashed at being seen in tears, which he considered as a weakness unbecoming of a soldier. He saluted Zeluco in an embarrassed and abrupt manner, and hurried to Carlostein, with whom he immediately embarked for Sicily.

Laura continued weeping for a considerable time after her brother left the room, which prevented her remarking that Zeluco was displeased at the scene of which he had been an unexpected witness. His ill-humour was indeed so habitual, that it might have made little impression on her although she had.

Carlostein and Seidlits being gone, and Laura far advanced in her pregnancy, she never went abroad but for a

short airing, or to pass a few hours with her mother, or at Signora Sporza's, where she sometimes met with Mr. N——, for whom she always felt and avowed great esteem.

Zeluco's time was almost entirely dedicated to Nerina, whose caprices increased in proportion to her influence over him, which, although they were generally directed to some interested point, were never carried farther than his temper, the variations of which she attentively watched, could bear.

All her whims and caprices indeed were so completely under her command, and managed with such address, that what has disgusted many lovers with their mistresses, was by her made to operate as stimulants to the passion of Zeluco when it seemed to languish.

She possessed the power of amusing in an extraordinary degree; this she exercised sometimes in a manner that would have shocked a mind more delicate than that of Zeluco, but was admirably adapted to his; he accordingly had frequent recourse to it against the demons of *ennui* and remorse, who haunted him alternately.

Nerina never mentioned Laura without the intention of turning her into ridicule, or insinuating something to her disadvantage, with frequent allusions to her altered shape, and the complaints incident to women in her situation.

Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza were also the frequent butts of her sarcasms; the first she represented as an antiquated coquet, who, calling every auxiliary of the toilette in support of her faded charms, still attempted fresh conquests. 'I am told,' said Nerina, 'that the ridiculous old lady stuns the ears of her yawning guests with the enumeration of her German admirers, landgraves, margraves, and barons without number. But, my dear sir, you ought really to give a hint to the imprudent old gentlewoman not to indulge her vanity at the expense of her teeth; for you may depend upon it, the pronunciation of those horrid names is one cause of their being so very loose.'

Signora Sporza she represented as a woman of intrigue, who, finding that two of her poor relations hung a little heavy on her hands, had fobb'd off one of them upon him as a wife, and thus had secured a comfortable maintenance for both.

Her caricaturas were given with such exquisite pantomime and mimicry as might entertain those who were not acquainted with the characters of the persons she intended to ridicule, but must have shocked every person of candour who was.

In establishing the influence which Nerina wished to retain over Zeluco, the force of habit was now joined to the power of amusing. Having accustomed himself to go to her at certain hours, he knew not how to fill up those hours without her, and the desire of visiting her returned periodically. In the midst of apparent levity, and seeming want of design, she observed a predetermined plan in most parts of her conduct to him; and often when he imagined her entirely vacant, or occupied in some very frivolous amusement, she was endeavouring to penetrate into his sentiments respecting certain subjects which she thought he might naturally wish to conceal from her. In consequence of this, it struck her, that notwithstanding Zeluco's passion for Laura was greatly cooled, and in spite of the pains she had taken to make her ridiculous in his eyes, yet he still retained a high esteem for her character. Indications of this, to the infinite mortification of Nerina, broke from him unintentionally sometimes, at the very instant when she was labouring to give him a very different impression. As Nerina was doubtful whether she herself had any hold of Zeluco by this sentiment of esteem, she was determined not to leave it in the possession of the woman whom she considered as her enemy. She secretly informed herself, therefore, of Laura's conduct and manner of passing her time, with a view to discover some ground upon which a fabric of falsehood injurious to the character of Laura might be raised; and after having for some time pursued these researches, by the means of her spies and

other agents, without success, she at last formed one of the most horrid projects that ever entered into the head of a profligate woman. This shocking idea suggested itself to her, in consequence of her having observed, that, of late, Zeluco displayed a particular dislike to Captain Seidlits, and of his mentioning to her something of his wife's grief at parting with her brother, and endeavouring to ridicule the pathetic manner in which they had taken leave of each other.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

Obliqua invidia, stimulisque agitabat amaris. VIRG.

In due time, however, Laura was safely delivered of a son; and as her husband seldom went near her, even to ask how she did, she had a very quick and complete recovery: in little more than a month after her delivery, she was at church, where Nerina had the mortification of seeing her with undiminished beauty, and in all the grace of elegant simplicity. She could not but observe that Laura attracted the regard and commanded the admiration of all the spectators, while she herself, although ostentatiously dressed, was passed over without attention by the eyes of those who did not know her, and with looks of disdain by those who did. Had Nerina been aware of Laura's coming, she would have avoided such an occasion of comparison, well knowing that the sentiments of the spectators would be against her. This incident, however, redoubled her malice against Laura, particularly as it happened at a time when she was already fretted at Laura's having a son; and the apprehension that he might be the means of turning the heart of Zeluco from herself to his wife.

In prosecution of her plan, Nerina sometimes introduced the mention of Captain Seidlits, remarking with a careless and undesigning air, that he was considered by many people as the handsomest man in Naples.

Zeluco laughed at this, saying, that they were no great judges of male beauty who harboured such an opinion.

'Yet in the opinion of most people,' said Nerina, 'they are the *best* judges; for you may think what you please, but this is a very general notion among the ladies.'

'I did not know before,' said Zeluco, 'that the proportions of a porter, and the strut of a Prussian serjeant, had been so much to their taste.'

'The blunt frankness of his manner is certainly better adapted to a camp than a drawing-room,' rejoined Nerina; 'yet he undoubtedly is a very great favourite with the Neapolitan ladies; many of whom are thought to have cultivated the acquaintance of your wife, and sung her praises wherever there was a likelihood of their being repeated, for no other reason, than that they might be on a good footing with him; for his great affection for his sister, and her influence with him, are pretty generally known.'

These hints, however, had no other immediate effect, than drawing from Zeluco some sarcasms against the person or address of Captain Seidlits.

In the meantime, the infant increased in strength and beauty, and began to distinguish objects; and one day in particular, being dandled by the nurse, he smiled in the face of Zeluco. Hard of heart and unfeeling as he was, the smiles of his child melted him into tenderness.—He caught the infant in his arms, and, yielding to the power of nature, he indulged the affection of a father.

The pleasure of those sensations made so strong an impression, that he could not refrain from praising the beauty of the child in the presence of Nerina.

These praises from him were gall and wormwood to her; they made her for a moment forget her usual caution, and risk discovering her aim by precipitation.

'The child must of course be strong and handsome,' said she, 'for I hear he is the express image of Captain Seidlits.'—'Captain Seidlits!' repeated Zeluco.

'Yes,' rejoined she, with a careless air, 'nothing can

be more natural; the captain being *half*-brother to the child's mother.'

'I never remarked any such resemblance,' said Zeluco, after a considerable pause.

'No!' said Nerina; 'then perhaps there is nothing in it; and all those who have been struck with the likeness, must be mistaken.'

Perceiving that her insinuation had taken effect, with an air of careless levity, she turned the discourse to other subjects: Zeluco did not attempt to bring it back to this, but was at intervals thoughtful and musing through the rest of the evening; of this Nerina took no notice, but by gay and licentious songs, by mimicry and a thousand playful tricks, seemed intent on nothing but amusing herself and him.

The poison which this artful woman thus administered continued to ferment in the mind of Zeluco, and occupied his thoughts by day and night. A long familiarity with vice, and every species of profligacy, made that appear probable to him, which to a man of integrity would seem next to impossible.

He now called to his remembrance many circumstances in themselves frivolous, and which had made no impression when they occurred, but which now added strength to the horrid insinuations of Nerina. The mutual regard which had always appeared between Laura and her brother—their sequestered walks at the first arrival of Seidlits—his frequent visits to his sister when alone—her eagerness to have him instead of Carlostein in the carriage with her when they returned from Baia—their mutual tenderness when they last parted, the confusion which Seidlits had betrayed, and his abrupt departure on Zeluco's entering the room—and finally, the resemblance which he imagined had struck so many people between Captain Seidlits and the child. He also recollected, that although his marriage took place five weeks before Seidlits arrived at Naples, yet the child was not born till near ten months after that period.

To those circumstances a ridiculous incident gave a degree of support, which, in the disturbed imagination of Zeluco, amounted to full proof.

He entered the nursery one day when he knew that Laura was not there; after talking a little to the nurse about the child, he had the weakness to say, for the insinuations of Nerina deprived him of cool reflection, he had the weakness to say to the nurse, 'Which of your lady's relations do you think this child resembles most?'

'La, sir,' replied the nurse, 'why, his own father, sure.'

'Idiot, which of my wife's *relations*, I say?' added Zeluco.

Laura's maid, who was present, wishing to correct the nurse's want of accuracy, interposed, saying, 'Your excellency, you know, is my lady's relation by marriage, though not by blood.'

'Who desired you to interfere, mistress?' said Zeluco, angrily; then turning to the nurse, he resumed,—'Do you not think he is like his uncle Captain Seidlits?'

'Jesu, Maria!' cried the nurse, 'What makes your excellency think so?'

'Speak without evasion, woman,' exclaimed Zeluco. 'Do you not think him like my wife's brother, Captain Seidlits?'

'O Lord, yes, an't please your excellency,' cried the nurse, terrified at his manner: 'very like Captain Seidlits.'

'You have heard many people remark it,' continued he, 'have you not?'

'A great many indeed,' cried the nurse, who began now to think that as Seidlits was a stately man, Zeluco was flattered by his child being thought like him: besides, she was so flurried by his passionate manner of questioning, that she would have echoed back whatever question he could have asked.

But Laura's maid, who had been silenced at the beginning, could no longer restrain herself; for she had suspected Zeluco of jealousy ever since the adventure of the mirror; and imagined that his present questioning proceeded from the same motive.

'How dare you utter such a horrid falsehood,' cried the maid to the nurse, 'you base lying hussy, you?'

'It is you who are a lying hussy,' retorted the nurse.

'Whom did you ever hear say such a thing?' said the maid.

The nurse meant to injure Laura no more than the maid; but was so piqued at the maid's attack, and at her own veracity's being called in question, that she was ready to have supported the lie she had been frightened into, by her solemn oath, rather than have yielded the point to the maid.

'Whom did I ever hear say it? I have heard a hundred,' said the nurse boldly.

'A hundred! O wretch!' cried the maid, turning up her eyes.

'Ay, a thousand, ten thousand,' continued the nurse.

'You never did, you never could,' exclaimed the maid, 'for the child resembles his own father.'

'That does not prevent his being exceedingly like Captain Seidlits,' continued the nurse; 'and I am convinced, if he lives, that he will be as stately a man to the full.'

'Hold your scandalous tongue,' vociferated the maid, 'you vile, worthless, lying wretch; the child resembles no man but my master.'

'He is ten thousand times liker Captain Seidlits,' cried the nurse, in a violent rage; 'and all the world think so, and say so.'

'All the world,' exclaimed the maid, lifting her eyes and arms.

'Yes, all the world,' repeated the nurse; 'and if you will only call them into the room, they will tell you so to your face.'

Zeluco withdrew, frowning and biting his lips. Madame de Seidlits with Laura came into the room soon after, and the altercation ceased.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

The Danger of vicious Confidences—Indignation of Laura.

In his present state of mind, Zeluco might naturally have questioned his confidential valet on this subject, to know what he had remarked respecting the behaviour of Laura and her brother; but this man was no longer on the same footing with him that he had formerly been.

The valet had long beheld with indignation the influence which Nerina gained with his master, and endeavoured to counteract it by every means in his power; but in besieging the heart and retaining the favour of a person of Zeluco's character, Nerina was a more skilful engineer than the valet; besides, she made use of more powerful artillery than he was possessed of. Nerina therefore, having completely gained the ascendency, did not choose that Zeluco should have an old confidential servant about him, who was not devoted to her interest. She took every opportunity of disgusting the master with this man, while by many underhand means she endeavoured to render the man equally tired of the master; pretending all the while that she was the valet's friend.

The fellow was not so easily duped as she imagined; convinced of her enmity, despairing of regaining the favour of Zeluco, and prompted by hatred to both, he waited secretly on Signora Sporza, gave her a circumstantial account of the pretended robbers who had attacked Laura and her on their return from Mount Vesuvius; and assured her that he himself had charged the pistols with powder only, but when it appeared from Zeluco's wound, that one of them had been loaded with ball, he said, he recollected that in a small box in his master's writing-desk, he had seen four pistol-bullets the day immediately preceding the expedition; and that on examining the same box at his return, he found only two, from which he concluded that Zeluco had secretly put the other brace into the pistol delivered to the servant, with an intention

no doubt of murdering Signora Sporza; for he had given the servant particular directions to fire it in her face. That the wounding of Zeluco, therefore, was entirely accidental, owing to the hurry of the servant, and the balls having missed her.

The valet finished his narrative, by declaring, that his motive in giving her this information, was good-will to Signora Sporza, against whom Zeluco still retained his ancient malice; and a regard for Laura's safety, whose life, he said, was also in danger from a husband so very wicked, and who was entirely under the dominion of a woman, more wicked, if possible, than himself.

After rewarding the man for his intelligence, Signora Sporza enjoined him to mention it to no other person, but to continue to behave to his master as usual, that there might be no suspicion of an understanding between the valet and her; and to remain quite inactive, till she had time to consult with her friends what measures should be adopted, of which the valet should receive timely notice; and he might rely on being still more liberally rewarded.

Signora Sporza communicated the whole of this man's narrative to Laura, whom it surprised and shocked exceedingly; for bad as her opinion was of her husband's disposition, she never had thought him capable of this degree of wickedness. She was filled likewise with indignation at the history of the sham attack by which her mother, and she herself had been in some measure imposed upon, while she felt the greatest contempt for the man who was obliged to have recourse to such a pitiful trick, to throw a false lustre on his character.

Signora Sporza gave it as her opinion, that Laura should write to her brother, press his immediate return, throw herself into his protection, and separate for ever from her horrid husband; adding, that his attachment to Nerina, and fear of Captain Seidlits, would induce him to agree to the separation on proper terms. But Laura, who laid little stress on what Signora Sporza meant by *terms*, felt

herself under great difficulty in determining how to proceed; for she thought her brother a very improper negotiator with Zeluco: and then, although she had no doubt of her husband's willingness to separate from her, she was afraid he might object to her having the child, from whom she could not without pain be absent, and whom she could not without horror abandon to the immediate care and future example of such a father.

After much reflection she wrote to her brother, expressing a desire of his speedy return, but not in the most urgent terms; nor did she assign any particular reason, but requested that he would inclose his answer under cover to Signora Sporza. When Laura had finished her letter, she told her friend, that at her brother's return she would explain her views to him in the most cautious manner, and in the presence of his friend the baron Carlostein.

She determined at the same time, that in case her husband consented to leave the child even for a few years under her care after the separation took place, she would insist on Carlostein's leaving Naples; and if he refused, she resolved never after to admit his visits, even in the company of her mother or brother. She wished, however, that Carlostein should remain till every thing regarding the separation was settled, because he would be a check to the impetuosity of her brother; and also because she hoped that through his influence with her husband, he would prevail on him to agree to the article nearest her heart, of leaving the child to her own care and management.

Self-sufficiency was no part of this amiable woman's character, however virtuous her inclinations were; she was conscious of a partiality for Carlostein, which convinced her that her safest course was to forego the pleasure of his company entirely.

In the meanwhile the heart of Zeluco glowed with rage against Laura and Seidlits, and he revolved in his mind various plans of revenge; but as his wrath was

deadly, he wished to adopt such an one as would at once satiate his vengeance and secure his safety.

The last he thought inconsistent with his making Nerina a confidant of his measures; for in spite of his partiality for her, and his believing that she had a great deal for him, he knew that this might not always be the case, and therefore he meditated some plan of revenge which required not her assistance, and which he meant to postpone till the return of Seidlits, being determined to involve both the brother and sister in the same ruin.

As he imagined, however, that he should need an accomplice for some part at least of the scheme, he began to sooth his valet, and behave in a more confidential manner to him, with a view to conciliate matters; but this fellow having been seduced into vice and not originally a villain, was not sufficiently a hypocrite to deceive his master. Zeluco perceived through his affected obsequiousness, that the man was disobliged, and not to be trusted: although he had never been the confident of his master in any thing of so much importance as that which now occupied his thoughts, yet Zeluco was conscious that this man was acquainted with certain parts of his conduct which he would not like to have revealed to the world. On observing therefore the mutinous state of his valet's mind, which he had overlooked before, he determined to keep him in as good humour as he could till Seidlits returned, and then send him on some pretext to Sicily, where he knew how to have him disposed of in a manner more agreeable to his own safety.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

He retir'd unseen,
To brood in secret on his gather'd spleen,
And methodize revenge. DRYDEN.

THE mind of Zeluco being engrossed with those desperate purposes, he passed much of his time in solitude and meditation.

As he walked early one morning towards the hill of Pausilippo, he observed two men coming out of the grotto: they seemed conversing together when Zeluco first saw them; but as he approached, one fell behind the other, and a little to one side. As he who was most advanced drew near, Zeluco recognised him for an old acquaintance; his name was Bertram, the son of a clergyman of Geneva, who, from a spirit of adventure to which the natives of that city are much addicted, had travelled into Spain, to visit a relation who was secretary to an ambassador at the court of Madrid, through whose interest this young man got a commission in the Spanish service. Zeluco had been several times in company with him at Madrid; and particularly once a short time before Zeluco himself left that city, he had met Bertram at a gaming-house, and stript him of all his money: this circumstance served to make each recollect the other. After the usual compliments, 'You were very unfortunate the last night we were in company together,' said Zeluco.

'It was thought so,' answered Bertram.

'I am much afraid that what I won put you to much inconveniency,' rejoined Zeluco.

'Such inconveniences must sometimes be expected by those who play,' said Bertram.

'You have quitted the Spanish service, I presume,' resumed Zeluco.

'I have,' said the other.

'You do not think of leaving Naples soon.'

'It is not in my power to leave it immediately,' said Bertram.

'How so?'

'Why,' continued Bertram with a smile, 'you find me in the condition you left me in,—without money,—in short, I have overshot my credit, and I now wait for a small remittance to enable me to leave this place.'

Zeluco then told him he should be happy to accommodate him in whatever sum he needed; 'I am engaged this morning,' added he, 'but if you will walk a little after it is dusk in the square before the palace, I will soon join you, and conduct you to a place where we may have a cheerful glass together; I am impatient to hear your adventures since we parted.'

Bertram promised to meet him at the time and place appointed. They then parted, and each continued his walk; but Zeluco immediately turning, said to Bertram, 'You had best not mention my name, nor hint to any person that we are acquainted; the reason of this caution you will know hereafter; but, in the meantime, I can only tell you that it will not be in my power to serve you as I intend, if you do.'

Bertram assured him he would not, and they again took leave of each other.

Zeluco remembered, that this Bertram was considered at the time he knew him, as a young fellow of desperate fortune, and devoted to gaming, but respected on account of the presence of mind and intrepidity with which he had extricated himself from a very hazardous adventure, in which he was involved before Zeluco arrived at Madrid, and which was much talked of at the time. Zeluco had heard no more of him after he himself left Spain, but imagined he was ruined by play, and had now become an adventurer living by his wits, and ready for any desperate enterprise in which there was a likelihood of bettering his fortune. What added strength to his conjectures was, his having remarked the man who was in conversation with Bertram before Zeluco joined him: this man Zeluco was persuaded he had seen with a chain around his leg, working among the malefactors at Casser-

ta; which very suspicious circumstance, and the fellow's retiring and standing aloof, while Bertram and he conversed, convinced Zeluco that his old acquaintance was just such a person as he was in want of. He had not fully determined in what manner he should employ him, but a variety of disjointed ideas of vengeful import floated in his imagination; and he much wished to attach to his views a man such as he took Bertram to be, needy, daring, and profligate; but he knew that the aid he expected from him was of a nature which made it highly expedient both for his own safety and that of his auxiliary, that their acquaintance with each other should not be known, for which reason he was impatient till they separated, lest they should be observed conversing.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

——— Thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those,
Whose wit and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.

SHAKESPEARE.

At the time appointed, Bertram walked before the palace-gate, and was soon joined by Zeluco, wrapped in a Portuguese cloak, who desiring him to follow, conducted him through various winding alleys, to the door of a detached house, which, on ringing a bell, seemed to open of itself, for nobody appeared; but Zeluco, after carefully shutting the door, led Bertram into a room commodiously fitted up, with a cold collation and various kinds of wine on the table.

This apartment Zeluco kept for the purpose of entertaining such friends as it was inexpedient to invite to his own house. Nerina, and others, had frequently met him here:—the servants were previously instructed what they

should provide; and the guests were served with whatever they needed, by the means of a turning cup-board, such as is used in convents.

'I hate being incommoded with servants,' said Zeluco, 'particularly on an occasion of this kind, when I am to enjoy a confidential conversation with an old friend. I have therefore taken care that no domestic shall interrupt us.—Pray help yourself to what you like.'

After they had supped and drunk a few glasses of wine, —'I am much afraid,' said Zeluco, 'that the four hundred dollars I won from you at Madrid put you to great inconveniency, for I remember I was afterwards informed you were in debt at that time.'

'I was indeed,' said Bertram.

'Well then, I hope you soon after won double the sum,' said Zeluco.

'I have never played since,' answered Bertram.

'Never!' cried Zeluco.

'Never,' replied Bertram.

'How did you contrive to pay your debts then?' said Zeluco.

'A brother officer, hearing of my ill luck, paid me an old debt which I had despaired of;—this helped me greatly;—living on half my pay for several months did the rest; at last I had the pleasure of paying all my debts to the last farthing.'

'It is next to impossible,' said Zeluco, 'for an officer in the Spanish service, of the rank you then were, to live on his full pay; I cannot conceive how you contrived to exist on the half.'

'More difficult things may be performed by those who are resolved to be just,' replied Bertram; 'I was under the necessity of living very poorly to be sure; but if I had not, some of my creditors, who were poor trades-people, must have starved.'

And what if they had, thought Zeluco, and then saying aloud, 'So to prevent their starving you half starved yourself?'

'Not quite so, signor,' replied Bertram; 'though to be sure my table was not sumptuous.'

'This must have been a very cruel course of equity however,' said Zeluco.

'I have been repaid by the satisfaction it has afforded me since,' replied Bertram.

'I dare swear you often cursed me in your heart,' said Zeluco.

'A curse has sometimes escaped my lips,' said Bertram, 'but I do not remember my having ever cursed any body in my heart.'

'I should forgive you if you had.—The loss of four hundred dollars to one in your circumstances was a dreadful misfortune,' added Zeluco.

'I hope they were of service to you,' said Bertram; 'for their loss was one of the luckiest things that ever happened to me. I was obliged to pinch so hard to make it up, that I have thought myself in affluence ever since.'

'You are a philosopher,' said Zeluco, 'and bear misfortunes with great fortitude.'

'I have hardly ever had any to bear,' said Bertram.

'I am surprised to hear you say so,' rejoined Zeluco; 'because I was told that the four hundred dollars which I won, was but the conclusion of a very persevering run of ill fortune.—I heard you lost near seven thousand dollars in the space of a month.'

'Thereabout,' said Bertram.

'And what in the devil's name do you call that?' said Zeluco.—'Surely a man in the situation you then were, who loses such a sum in the course of a month's play, must think himself very unfortunate.'

'Not if he previously win it all in the course of a week's play,' replied Bertram, 'which was precisely my case.—I could never have had the misfortune to lose seven thousand dollars, if I had not first had the good fortune to win them.'

'That is not the usual way in which men calculate their own misfortunes,' said Zeluco.

'It is the fair way, however,' rejoined Bertram; 'for the most fortunate man that ever existed will be proved to be unfortunate, if you pick out all the lucky incidents of his life, and leave the unlucky behind; but I had one piece of good fortune which I have not mentioned.'

'What was that?' said Zeluco.

'Out of the first thousand dollars, I remitted seven hundred to my father.'

'The devil you did,' cried Zeluco.

'Yes,' said Bertram,' 'I thank heaven, I put that out of the power of chance.'

'The old boy I hope repaid you threefold?' said Zeluco.

'Aye, tenfold,' replied Bertram; 'for he informed me by the next post, that it had enabled him to clear off some debts that distressed him exceedingly.'

'But after your loss with me,' said Zeluco, 'I am surprised you never again tried your fortune at play.'

'It required all my fortitude to abstain from it,' said Bertram; 'for although deep play is little known among the citizens of Geneva, I was early led into it by a young Englishman with whom I was intimate before I left that city. I continued to play with uncommon success after I went to Madrid. This propensity grew into a passion, and I was thoughtless and unjust enough to risk in play with you the money which I had appropriated for the discharge of what I owed to trades-people and others, for which as I felt a degree of remorse which I never before experienced, I determined to effect the discharge of my debts by the most rigid economy; yet I must own I was often strongly tempted to try my fortune once more at play; for it occurred to me that by a few successful throws of the dice I might abridge many lingering months of economy; but I reflected on the other hand, that in case I should lose, it would be at the expense of those poor creditors whom, by a strict adherence to my plan of economy, it was in my power to pay.—While I was balancing this matter in my mind, I received a letter from

my father, which decided the point. I paid the money I had in my hands equally among my creditors, and directly after began my course of economy, in which I persevered till I was entirely free from debt; and I have never played, nor been in debt since.'

'Your father's letter must have contained very forcible reasoning,' said Zeluco, 'to produce such an effect.'

'It contained a recapitulation of those principles which he had instilled into my mind in childhood; an adherence to which has been the source of all the comfort I have had in life, and from which I never deviated, in the smallest degree, without remorse.'

'I should be glad to see this powerful epistle, or hear what you can recollect of it,' said Zeluco.

'I am sorry I have it not about me,' said Bertram; 'for there is a peculiar energy in my father's style to which my memory cannot do justice. The letter in question was written in consequence of his having heard that I was patronized by a certain man in power, from whom I had reason to expect promotion; from this he took occasion to remind me, that the favour of men was precarious, and often guided by caprice; that they might smile upon me to-day, and neglect me to-morrow, however uniformly zealous I might be to retain their good-will; but he earnestly entreated me to make it my chief study to find favour in the eyes of my Creator, in whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.'

'Your father was a clergyman no doubt,' said Zeluco, stifling a laugh.

'He was,' replied Bertram, 'and there never was a worthier.'

'But did he give you any hint how you were to become a favourite? I mean,' continued Zeluco, 'besides the old way by devotion and religious ceremonies.'

'My father's devotion lay in his heart,' said Bertram, 'and was little embarrassed with ceremonies.'

'Well then,' continued Zeluco, 'how were you to carry your point?'

'By the duties of humanity and benevolence to my ellow-creatures, and by the most strict integrity; he re-ommended particularly that I should listen to the dic-ates of conscience, which he called the voice of God, and hich, even in this life, punishes and rewards in a certain egree, according to our conduct. If ever,' continued ertram, giving the words of his father's letter; 'If ever, y son, you should feel a propensity to do an unfair hing, overcome it immediately, for no earthly considera-ion can make it your interest.—Heaven and earth shall ass away, but this truth shall remain, *Whatsoever a man weth that he shall reap.* Therefore, my dear Bertram, ever, O never, be such a fool as to be a knave.'

Bertram repeated this part of the letter with unusual ervour, and Zeluco, who was disposed to turn the whole nto ridicule, had certain sensations which spoilt his in-lination to mirth. He remained for some time in a kind f reverie; then rousing himself, he looked at Bertram, aying, 'Well, sir, what happened next?'

'I told you,' resumed Bertram, 'that before I read his admonition, my conscience had been whispering that was not quite fair in me to risk the money which the oor trades-people stood so much in need of; yet my a-arice, or love of play, whichever you please, was endea-ouring to silence these whispers with all the sophistry ey could muster. But I thank God, my father's letter oming to the aid of conscience, I had the strength to act I did.'

By this time Zeluco plainly perceived that his old ac-uaintance was a very different kind of man from what he ad expected, and would by no means suit his purpose; et he felt a strong curiosity to know the whole of his istory. Zeluco therefore pursuing his inquiries; 'Upon he whole, however,' resumed he, 'you must have passed our time but uncomfortably in the Spanish service?'

'Forgive me,' replied Bertram, 'after I had paid my ebts, my time was spent very cheerfully: my mind was ree from self-reproach; I possessed the friendship of

some officers of sense and honour; I enjoyed good health and good spirits; for I so contrived matters that my hours never hung on my hands, but were rather too short for my employments; at night I fell asleep, satisfied with the manner in which I had passed the day, and rose every morning in spirits to perform my duty, and eager to improve my mind.'

In the course of Zeluco's inquiries, Bertram informed him, that after remaining some years in the Spanish service, a brother of his mother's had made him an advantageous proposal, which would have enabled him to live comfortably in his own country, to which he had for some time felt a strong desire of returning; his father, and other relations, having written very pressing letters to that purpose.

'You disposed of your commission, and returned accordingly?' said Zeluco.

'I could not immediately indulge my own desire, nor yield to the entreaties of my friends,' replied Bertram; 'because there was a rumour of war, which sometime after was verified, so I thought myself bound in honour to remain with the regiment, which soon was sent on active service.'

'The extraordinary expense to which officers are put during war, would bear hard on you who had no resource but your pay,' said Zeluco.

'Very fortunately I had studied mathematics and fortification at Geneva, and was frequently employed as an engineer, for which I received additional pay; this enabled me,' replied Bertram, 'to live as well as other officers of my rank, and to remit a small sum of money to a female cousin of mine at Geneva, who had fallen under the displeasure of her other relations.'

'This *cousin* was young and handsome, no doubt,' said Zeluco.

'On the contrary,' said Bertram; 'she was an elderly woman, who never had been handsome, but had made a rash marriage, disapproved of by all her relations.'

'What then interested you so much in her?' said Zeluco; 'her mental accomplishments and virtue no doubt.'

'Her accomplishments, poor woman,' replied Bertram, 'never were conspicuous, and rumour was by no means favourable to her reputation in the other particular: in short, her conduct afforded such just grounds to her nearest relations to abandon her, that I thought myself bound to befriend her, because her other friends were either too angry or too much ashamed of her to afford her any assistance.'

'But pray,' said Zeluco, 'when did you quite the Spanish service.'

'At the peace,' replied the other, 'when our regiment was ordered home.'

'I remember to have heard that one of the captains of your regiment died on the passage; I suppose you were promoted to the company?'

'As I was the oldest lieutenant in the regiment, and had received two wounds in the service, my friends flattered me I should; but it was given to a young officer, nephew to a grandee of Spain.'

'That was hard,' said Zeluco.

'Not particularly so,' said Bertram; 'men of family have been allowed advantages in all services; it can hardly be expected that they will serve otherwise; and if this young gentleman had been promoted to a company in any other regiment, it would have been equally hard on the oldest subaltern of that regiment.'

'But probably this was a person of little or no merit,' said Zeluco.

'Forgive me,' replied Bertram; 'he is a very spirited young man, and I am convinced from what I know of him, will prove an excellent officer.'

'I should have thought it damned hard, however, had I been in your place, that another should carry away the whole reward due to me.'

'He did not carry away the whole,' said Bertram;

'for my behaviour on several occasions was publicly approved of by the general, and praised by the whole army: my worthy father, and all my friends at Geneva, were informed of it, and rejoiced at the intelligence; besides, I have the approbation of my own mind; I am conscious of having been ever faithful to my trust, and of having done my duty as a soldier. I had the happiness of being loved by the soldiers as well as the officers of the regiment; many of the poor fellows were in tears when I left them. You must be sensible that this is a very pleasing reward, and occasions delightful sensations.'

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

A sight of horror to the cruel wretch,
Who all day long in sordid pleasure roll'd,
Himself an useless load, has squander'd vile,
Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
A drooping family of modest worth.
But to the generous still improving mind,
That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,
Diffusing kind beneficence around;
To him the long review of order'd life
Is inward rapture.

THOMSON.

As Zeluco had never felt any of the delightful sensations which Bertram alluded to, he became a little impatient at this observation. 'Well, well,' said he, 'all this is mighty fine; but pray, my good sir, what man was he whom I saw in conversation with you this morning, a little before I joined you?'

'That man,' replied Bertram, smiling, 'is just liberated from the galleys; he is my only attendant; if my suit be not numerous, signor, you must allow that it is select.'

'Liberated from the galleys!' cried Zeluco, with affected surprise.

'Yes, he was condemned to the galleys or to hard labour for life; it comes to the same thing; his last em-

loyment was at the royal works at Casserta with other aves, some Christian, some Mahometan.'

'But how came *you* connected with him?' said Zeuco.

'You shall hear,' replied Bertram. 'Having quitted he Spanish service, and returned to my sweet native city f Geneva, I lived in the most agreeable manner; and his poor man, a Savoyard by birth, was my footman; he a good-natured creature, though not very clever, and I ought no other: in the meantime, a worthless fellow, a Piedmontese, came to Geneva, and filling my servant's ead with many fine stories concerning Italy, persuaded im to quit my service, and accompany him to that country, whether this Piedmontese was returning from France. They travelled together to Milan, where failing in their ndeavours to get into service, and their money being exausted, they inlisted in an Austrian regiment, but had ot been quite a month in this situation, when the Piedmontese was recognised by two Neapolitans, as a person who had been imprisoned above three years before at Naples, on an accusation of robbery with assassination, ut had made his escape from prison. An information to his purpose being formally made, the Piedmontese was aken into custody, and my poor Antonio, who had accompanied him to Milan, and inlisted at the same time, was seized and committed to prison as his accomplice; or the witnesses declared there had been two men engaged in the robbery, although only one had been apprehended at Naples.

'On a requisition by the Neapolitan resident at Milan, they were both sent to Naples, but the Piedmontese had he dexterity to make his escape on the journey, and Antonio alone was brought prisoner to this city. The presumptions against him were greatly strengthened by the rcumstance of a seal having been found in his pocket, hich it was proved had belonged to the murdered person.

'It was in vain that the wretched Antonio told the

manner he had made acquaintance with the Piedmontese; —that he had been in service at Geneva at the time the murder was committed:—that he had bought the seal of his companion who had escaped, with many other particulars, all of them true, but none of them credited by his judges: however, as there was no direct proof of his having perpetrated the crime, he was not convicted capitally, but was condemned to a punishment in most people's eyes more severe, hard labour for life.

'The person who had been robbed and murdered was a man much esteemed on account of his character and manners; by his untimely death, a respectable family were in danger of being reduced from affluence to poverty: this created a general sympathy. The murder was supposed to have been accompanied with circumstances peculiarly cruel; the last excited as much indignation as the former did compassion.

'The more atrocious a crime is, there certainly is the less probability that the individual who happens to be taken up on suspicion of having perpetrated it, is really guilty; for this plain reason, that a much greater proportion of mankind are capable of committing a little crime than a very great one; but it happens frequently, that the just indignation against the crime is rashly and unjustly applied against whoever is first accused; and the very circumstance of uncommon atrocity which ought to render us difficult in the admission of the charge, is sometimes the cause of a precipitate and unjust condemnation. This seems to have been the case in the instance of poor Antonio.

'He has since told me, that he wrote to me immediately after receiving his hard sentence; but whether from the letter's having been neglected by the person to whom he gave it to be put into the post-office, or from whatever other cause, it never came to my hand; but after he had been several months in this situation, I received a letter which gave me the first intelligence of his misfortune; it was written in all the simplicity of truth; to convey

an idea of the horrors of his fate required not the aid of eloquence. 'I am condemned,' said he, 'to slavery for my whole life, on account of a murder committed at Naples when I was in your service at Geneva.'

'The blockhead deserved to suffer,' said Zeluco, 'for his folly in leaving your service, where he was happier than he deserved.'

'The poor fellow,' replied Bertram, 'made that very observation in his letter; but surely, sir, his sufferings were too severe for a piece of levity, or that love of variety so natural to us all. I was so shocked with the idea of an innocent man's being unjustly condemned, that my first impulse was to set out immediately for Naples; but on my mentioning this to some of my friends they assured me, that an attestation of the man's having been in my service at the time of the murder, and for a considerable space before and after, would be sufficient to procure his liberty. This was immediately drawn up in due form, and sent to Naples, inclosed in a letter to an eminent lawyer of that city.

'But Antonio's dismal situation haunted me day and night. I could not walk into the fields without thinking of his being chained to endless labour—nor eat a meal without reflecting on the scanty morsel moistened with tears on which the wretched Antonio fed—nor lie down in my bed without dreaming I beheld the unhappy man stretched on the damp pavement of a dungeon. 'Alas,' cried I, 'is it acting up to the divine precept, *do as you would be done by*, to trust the liberty and life of an innocent man to a letter, which may have miscarried or prove ineffectual? If I go myself, it will be in my power to identify the man, and by a thousand circumstances make his innocence so evident, that I must infallibly procure his immediate liberty.' These and similar reflections engrossed my mind entirely. I was by no means satisfied with my own conduct, and you know, sir,' continued Bertram, 'that when a man stands condemned at the bar of his own conscience, it is of small importance to his happiness

to be thought innocent by all the rest of the world; for my own part I felt myself so unhappy on this occasion, that in compassion to myself, as well as to Antonio, I set out for this city, before I could receive any answer to my letter.

'Most fortunate it was for Antonio and for me, that I did so. The lawyer to whom my letter was addressed was gone to Messina, and my letter disregarded. I found poor Antonio at hard labour at Casserta, among a number of wretches against whom crimes had been *proved* similar to that of which he was *presumed* guilty.

'To paint the poor fellow's joy and gratitude at sight of me,' continued Bertram, 'is not in my power; but I did not find it so easy a matter to procure his liberty as I expected; I had more difficulty in prevailing on some, to whom I addressed myself, only to hear my story, than I thought I should have had in obtaining the whole of my object; and when they had heard it, they seemed to think it of less importance than I ever before believed one human creature's happiness could possibly be to another.

'None of them expressed any doubt of the man's innocence, yet few would give themselves the least trouble to get him relieved: they shrugged up their shoulders, said it was hard on the man, but no business of theirs. I am convinced, sir, that it would shock you, were I to describe every circumstance of the savage hardness of heart and selfish indifference which were discovered by some. Well, I wish those gentlemen much good of their insensibility. I dare say it may have saved them some unpleasant moments, which I, and I doubt not you, sir, have felt! But of this I am convinced, that when I succeeded at length in procuring Antonio's liberty, my satisfaction was little inferior to his; and I have no doubt but it will afford me pleasure to my last hour; and so, sir, I leave you to judge whether or not I have reason to rejoice in having made this jaunt to Naples.'

Zeluco's eyes were fixed on the ground during the lat-

ter part of Bertram's narrative; and he continued silent and pensive for some time after it was finished. His reflexions seemed not of a pleasing nature; several sighs escaped from him; if he then threw back a glance on his own past life, he would discover no cheering ray reflected from acts of benevolence to brighten the gloomy retrospect, no cordial drop of self-approbation to comfort his drooping spirits.

'I fear my long story has tired you sir,' said Bertram; 'here is to your good health,' added he, filling his glass.

'I pledge you with all my heart,' said Zeluco, endeavouring to shake off reflection, in which however he did not succeed, till he had almost entirely drowned thought in repeated bumpers.

In the course of their conversation, Zeluco renewed the offer he had made in the morning, of furnishing Bertram with what money he had occasion for, till the letter of credit which he expected should arrive; but Bertram assured him that he was already accommodated. The fact was, that Buchanan having accidentally heard that a servant had been redeemed from slavery by his master, had gone and conversed with the man himself, from whom he heard all the particulars, of which he was so full, that on returning home he entered into the room where Mr. N—— was alone, saying,—'O sir, I have something to tell you, which I am sure will do your heart good to hear!'—He then gave him the whole story as he had received it from the Savoyard, concluding with this reflection.—'I really do imagine, sir, that there is something in the air of mountainous countries exceedingly favourable to kindness of heart.—I have heard several travellers declare that they had met with more hospitality in a short tour in the Highlands of Scotland, than in their journeys over all Flanders and the Low Countries, although the last are as full of populous towns as the former is of mountains.'

'This Bertram is a citizen of Geneva, whose territories are not mountainous,' said Mr. N——, smiling.

'Your honour will be pleased to remember,' replied Buchanan, 'that Geneva is situated by a fine lake, just as the village of Buchanan is by Loch Lomond; and there are mountains at no great distance from both.'

'I had forgot that,' said Mr. N——; 'but I am so charmed with the behaviour of this man, that I should like to be acquainted with him, although it could be proved against him that he had been born above a hundred miles from any lake or mountain.'

Mr. N—— went the very next morning to call on Bertram, and found him as he returned from his first interview with Zeluco, telling him he had done himself the honour of waiting on him expressly to solicit the acquaintance of a man of so much worth. In the course of their conversation, Mr. N—— discovered that he had been well acquainted with Bertram's father when he himself had been at Geneva, and when Bertram was in the Spanish service. Mr. N—— at the same time told Bertram, that he had received many civilities from his relations, and spoke of his father in such terms of regard as brought the tears into the son's eyes; who although he at first had declined Mr. N——'s offer, now told him he would with pleasure make use of his banker for what money he might need, till his own credit should arrive.

Zeluco seemed disappointed on finding that he was anticipated in fixing an obligation on Bertram. He asked, Whether he had mentioned to Mr. N—— any thing of their present meeting?

'I fancy, sir,' said Bertram, a little gravely, 'you have forgot that I promised not to mention my being acquainted with you to any body.'

Zeluco begged his excuse, saying, he *had* forgot; adding, that it would be no longer necessary to conceal their acquaintance, and invited him to dine with him the following day.

Bertram expressed no desire of knowing Zeluco's reason for his former wish of concealment, or for the secret manner in which they had met. He perceived that Zeluco began to be affected by the wine, and imputed his loss of memory, and his neglecting to explain this, to that circumstance.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

Lentus in meditando, ubi prorupisset, tristibus dictis atrocia facta conjungebat. TACIT.

THE suspicions which rankled in the breast of Zeluco would perhaps have gradually lost their force, and at length died away, had they not been carefully cherished and kept alive by the watchful malice of Nerina. She adapted and linked together every accidental circumstance in such an artful manner, that, to the disturbed fancy of Zeluco, they formed a chain of irrefragable force; the absurd answers of the nurse to his questions, and the passionate interference of Laura's maid, which of themselves had made a strong impression on his mind, received additional strength from the comments of Nerina.

Laura observed an increasing gloom on the countenance of her husband, and was shocked and terrified at the looks he sometimes threw on his child. She mentioned this to Signora Sporza, who, not having observed it herself, persuaded Laura, that what alarmed her proceeded entirely from her viewing the looks and actions of Zeluco through a medium of additional gloom ever since the information given by the valet.

A packet of letters arrived from Captain Seidlits, in which was one addressed to Mr. N——, one to Signora Sporza, and one to Madame de Seidlits, but none to Laura. This omission was a circumstance of new suspicion in the eyes of Zeluco, who was with Madame de Seidlits when she opened the cover of the letters. He suspected what was really the case, that there was a letter for Laura inclosed

in that for Signora Sporza; and had he been without a witness, it is not impossible but he might have had the meanness to have broken open the letter. Madame de Seidlits sent it by her own servant to Signora Sporza, and Zeluco remained on the watch to observe whether Signora Sporza did not send or bring a letter to Laura. She thought proper to bring it herself, and Zeluco met her as she was going to Laura's apartment. He accosted her with assumed cheerfulness, said he was going to drive out for a few miles, and being persuaded she would not accept, he invited her to accompany him in the carriage; which she having declined, he bade her adieu, saying, he would return within a few hours; and immediately went out of the house, but returned through the garden to his own apartment, by a door of which he alone had the key, and from thence passed unobserved into a small room adjoining that in which Laura and Signora Sporza were conversing. His design was to discover whether his suspicions regarding the letter were well founded, and to hear what passed between the two friends, when they thought themselves unobserved and him at a distance.

Zeluco could not distinctly hear every word that passed; but from what he did hear, he understood that a letter had come from Captain Seidlits to Laura;—that the captain with his friend Carlostein would arrive very soon;—that Laura earnestly wished to be separated from him as soon as possible, provided she should be permitted to take her child with her;—and at last he heard Laura with a raised voice distinctly pronounce these words.—'O my dearest brother, had you arrived a few weeks sooner at Naples, I should never have been united to this mean perfidious man!'

Zeluco was so transported with rage on hearing this, that he mechanically drew his stiletto, and was on the point of bursting into the room, and stabbing his wife, when hearing the voice of Signora Sporza, he was again tempted to listen.

Signora Sporza endeavoured to sooth and quiet the mind

of Laura by admonitions to patience and fortitude, representing that she would in a very short time have the pleasure of embracing her brother, who would unquestionably fall on means to free her for ever from her odious tyrant; reminding her at the same time, that it was of the utmost importance to manage the temper of the monster, till such time as he should agree to deliver the child to her care.

She then told Laura, that she was obliged to make a few morning visits, but would see her in the evening; and took her leave.

Zeluco remained for some time boiling with indignation in his listening place, which he left at last, and came round to the room in which Laura was. She had just received her child from the nurse when Zeluco entered.—He made a motion with his hand for the nurse to retire, which she directly did, leaving the child in Laura's arms.

Zeluco walked backward and forward for some time with a morose and gloomy countenance, without either speaking or seeming to take notice of either.

As this was nothing unusual, Laura paid no attention to it, nor did she remark the dreadful humour he was in, till turning quick upon her, he said, with a fierce look, 'Don't you think that child very like his father, madam?'

'He is much too young,' replied she, 'for his features to announce any particular likeness.'

'I have been told,' said he, 'that he already displays a most striking resemblance to your brother.'

'I am happy to hear it,' said Laura, caressing the child.

'Have you the audacity to say so, madam, and to my face?' exclaimed Zeluco, furiously.

'What is it that you mean, sir?' cried Laura, rising from her seat; for the child screamed, being alarmed at Zeluco's loud and threatening voice.

'Peace—incestuous bastard!' exclaimed he, grasping the infant by the throat with frantic violence.

'Ah, monster! you murder your child!' cried Laura, agonized with terror, and endeavouring to remove his distracted hand.

It was removed too late;—the child never breathed more.

The wretched mother sunk again upon her seat; her soul suspended between hope and despair, while her imploring eyes were rivetted on the face of the infant, which lay breathless on her knee.

The women hearing a confused noise, rushed into the room:—every means were used for the recovery of the child;—all were fruitless.

When it became certain that there was no hope, Laura, yielding to despair, clasped the dead infant to her bosom, crying, 'O my child! my child! take thy miserable mother with thee to the grave!' and she directly fell senseless on the floor.

The child's body being removed, Laura was carried to her bed in a state of insensibility.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Notre repentir n'est pas tant un regret du mal que nous avons fait, qu'une crainte de celui qui nous en peut arriver.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

When it appeared that the child was irrecoverably gone, Zeluco's jealous phrensy dwindled into personal fear, lest he should be called to account for the murder of the child. To the attendants, therefore, he made a great display of concern for the child's death, and still more for the consequences it might have on the health of his beloved wife. And when Signora Sporza returned, he took care to meet her, and informed her, before the nurse and other domestics, with an air of infinite sorrow, that the dear infant had been seized on a sudden in a most unexpected manner with convulsions while he was in his mother's arms; and that, in spite of all the means which could be used to save his life, the poor child had expired; on which Laura had immediately fainted, and nothing but his concern for her had prevented him from being in the same state; that she still continued very much disturbed,

for which reason it was highly proper to keep her quiet and secluded from all company; for the sight of any body, or asking her questions in her present situation, might have very bad consequences.

Signora Sporza did not listen to this representation without showing symptoms of impatience; and when he finished, she made no answer, but that she must immediately see her friend.

'You cannot think of it at present, my dear madam,' said Zeluco.

'I must see my friend immediately,' said she, moving towards the apartment in which Laura was.

'Good heavens!' cried he, stepping between her and the door, 'you would not intrude upon her sorrow at such a moment?'

'She never thought my visits intrusion,' replied Signora Sporza; 'I must see her, sir.—Allow me to pass.'

Zeluco was apprehensive that Laura would immediately accuse him of the child's death, or allow some expression to fall from her that would unfold the manner of it; he was very desirous therefore that no person should be admitted to her till he himself had tried to persuade her that the infant's death was accidental; or, if he failed in that, he hoped he should, by expressing great grief and contrition for the involuntary movement his hand had made, be able to prevail on Laura to promise never to mention what she had seen. Had he once obtained such a promise, he knew that he should be safe, being well acquainted with her inviolable attachment to her word. He strove therefore by every argument he could devise to prevail on Signora Sporza to postpone her visit; but all his arguments were lost on her. Signora Sporza's impatience to see her friend augmented in proportion to the earnestness he showed to prevent it; she became louder and more violent in her manner, and Zeluco was obliged to yield the point, informing her at the same time, that he was much afraid that Laura's senses were disturbed by the shock of such an unexpected accident.

Zeluco did not know when he made this assertion that it was true; he even dreaded that it was not; but he threw it out, that less stress might be laid on any expression which, in the agony of grief, might fall from Laura. The disturbance of Laura's senses, which he asserted at random, had in reality taken place.

Sometime after her being carried to bed, as was mentioned, she showed signs of life, but of no distinct recollection; after remaining a few minutes in this state, she relapsed into a complete stupor, from which, after some interval, she recovered as before, having only a confused impression that something dreadful had happened, but without being able to recover her scattered senses so far as to remember what it was.

When Signora Sporza came to the door of Laura's bedchamber, she heard her, in a wild and plaintive tone, saying, 'Alas! where have I been? What has happened? Can no body tell? Do all your brains turn round; do your hearts fail, like mine?' She then fell back into her former stupor.

While she lay in this state, the attendants informed Signora Sporza, that their mistress repeated near the same expressions as often as she recovered from those fits of fainting.

Signora Sporza seated herself at Laura's bed-side, with her eyes fixed on her face, and watching all her movements. As soon as she perceived her recovering, she took hold of her hand, and addressing her in the most soothing and affectionate tone of voice, 'How do you do, my lovely friend?' said she.

Laura stared her wildly in the face for some time without speaking, and then cried, 'O! is it you? Are you come at last?'—'Yes, my dear, I am come,' replied Signora Sporza.—'But do you know,' said Laura, 'what has happened.'—'I am very sorry,' replied Signora Sporza 'for what has happened.'—'Pray, tell me,' cried Laura, 'what it is? None of them will tell me; but I am sure it is something very sad; for see they all look sad and mournful,

and you are sorrowful too, and my poor heart is sad, although I know not wherefore—but my head turns so!——'

Madame de Seidlits, by the indiscretion of a servant, had been told of the infant's death, with the additional circumstance that Laura herself was dying.

Half frantic at the intelligence, she hurried from her own house to that of Zeluco, and without listening to the accounts he endeavoured to give her, or regarding the opposition that was made to her appearance suddenly before her daughter, she rushed into her bedchamber, exclaiming, 'My child! my child! where is my child?'

At this expression Laura started, sat up in the bed, and seemed in some degree to recover her recollection; with one hand opposing her mother's embrace, while with a solemn tone of voice, and sternness of regard, most unlike her natural sweetness, she pronounced, '*My* child is gone for ever!—the fiend grasped him;' after which she screamed and fell back again insensible on the pillow. When she recovered, she uttered many expressions seemingly incoherent, but which bore some relation to the act which had produced her disorder. Had any person been witness to the child's murder, he would easily have perceived that Laura's most incoherent expression glanced at that deed; but as nobody had, all imagined they were quite unmeaning, and proceeding from the disorder which the child's unexpected death had produced.

Madame de Seidlits having recovered in some degree the first shock she felt on perceiving the melancholy state in which her daughter was, summoned all her fortitude that she might be enabled to assist Signora Sporza in soothing, supporting, and comforting Laura.

A physician having arrived, was, according to the orders given by Zeluco, introduced to his apartment before he was permitted to see Laura. Zeluco, with ostentatious sorrow, told him of the child's being suddenly carried off by a convulsion fit; that there was reason to apprehend this sad event had disturbed the senses of his wife, as she had been talking extravagantly ever since; did not know

her intimate acquaintance, and was terrified at the sight of her best friends. Having thus prepared the physician, he allowed him to visit Laura.

'She was just recovered from a fit of stupor when he was introduced. On his addressing her, she raised her head from the pillow, and looked very earnestly at him, but made no answer to his questions; on his proposing to retire, she said with a timid voice, 'I beg, my good sir, that you will not permit the wicked fiend to come near me.'

The physician being now confirmed in the belief of what Zeluco had told him, ordered her to be blooded, to be kept very quiet, and not to be disturbed with questions, or in any way encouraged to speak, for it was too evident that her mind was disturbed; at the same time he gave Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza great reason to hope, that with care she would be in a short time restored to her perfect health.'

Although Zeluco had reason to be pleased with the first part of the physician's declaration, he was alarmed at the last. While Laura remained in the present state, little stress could be laid on what she said; but should she recover, whatever account she gave, he well knew, would carry complete conviction to the minds of all who knew her. He could not indeed accuse himself of a predetermined intention of murdering the child; but he had great reason for remorse and self-condemnation, when he reflected that the child's death was occasioned by the propensity he betrayed in his infancy, and had indulged ever since, of giving way to every impulse of passion. In this hour of reflection, among the many stinging recollections which intruded themselves on his memory, he could not exclude the remonstrance of his tutor, when he himself, yet a child, had, in a fit of groundless passion, squeezed his sparrow to death; that remonstrance now appeared to his alarmed conscience in the light of a prophecy: 'Had I paid more regard,' said he to himself, 'to what that worthy man then, and on other occasions, told me, I

should not now have reason to dread the consequences of this cursed accident.'

Yet, whatever remorse Zeluco felt for various and accumulated instances of wickedness, of which his conscience accused him, what chiefly kept his mind on the rack at present was, a fear that those allusive expressions, which constantly dropt from Laura, might lead to a suspicion of the fact which he wished so much to conceal; for however mysterious or incoherent they might appear to others, they were so clear and connected to him, that he received a fresh alarm as often as any of them were repeated; and whatever he hoped, he was by no means certain, that when Laura recovered, she would not relate the fact as it really happened, and accuse him publicly; for these reasons he fervently wished that she might die of her present illness, or remain distracted.

The continual anxiety he had for his own safety suspended the ripening of a certain plan which before occupied his thoughts for the destruction of Seidlits, who was now daily expected. His whole attention was directed towards Laura; for, although he never ventured to appear in her sight, yet he took care to have every word reported to him that fell from her lips; and he was kept in continual alarm at the import of her expressions.

CHAPTER XC.

Him shall the fury passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that sculks behind;
* * * *
Or Jealousy, with rankled tooth,
That inly gnaws the heart;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visag'd comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart. GRAY.

About this time Carlostein and Seidlits returned from their excursion; they went directly to the house of Ma-

dame de Seidlits, and had the first account of the child's death and Laura's indisposition from her maid; Madame de Seidlits herself being then in bed, indisposed with the watching and fatigue which she had undergone. The two friends were equally shocked at this affecting narrative; they spoke of calling at Signora Sporza's, but were informed that she slept constantly at the house of Zeluco, and was hardly ever a moment from her bed-side. Captain Seidlits then proposed to go directly there, whether Carlostein thought he could not with propriety accompany him; but, overwhelmed with the deepest sorrow, went to his lodging, there to wait for the return of his friend.

Zeluco received Seidlits with all the appearance of affliction. 'Alas! my friend,' cried he, 'we have lost your dear little nephew; he was cut off by convulsions in the arms of his mother. I am told by physicians, that such accidents are not uncommon among infants. I leave you to judge of his poor mother's situation; she has been in a most disordered state of mind ever since; and she seems to be always worse after seeing any of her old acquaintance.'

To all this Seidlits made little or no answer; but a woman who had the particular care of Laura coming out of her bedchamber, and reporting that she was more composed than usual, he desired to be admitted to see her.

'I fear it will increase her uneasiness,' said Zeluco.

'I am convinced it will give her pleasure,' said Seidlits; 'for she had always pleasure in seeing me.'

'Really!' said Zeluco, looking fiercely at Seidlits, for a movement of jealousy threw him off his guard.

'I have every reason to think so,' resumed Seidlits naturally, and without observing how Zeluco was affected.

'The doctor must determine,' said Laura's nurse, pointing to the physician who entered the room.

'The case being stated to him, 'Let her brother's name be mentioned to her,' said he, 'before he appears, and we will observe how she is affected.'

Zeluco did not object to the experiment; he thought something might fall from Laura, on mentioning or seeing Seidlits, which would betray the intimacy that, as he suspected, had been between them.

The physician conducted Seidlits to Laura's bedchamber. Zeluco stood at the door, which he kept a-jar for the purpose of listening.

Laura sat up in the bed, propped with pillows; Signora Sporza near her. The physician whispered to Signora Sporza, that Captain Seidlits was arrived, and in the house; and he then said aloud to her, 'Your friend Captain Seidlits is safely arrived at Naples.'

'I am most happy to hear it,' said she, looking at Laura, who took no notice.

'Did you not hear, my dear,' said Signora Sporza, addressing Laura—'Did you not hear what the doctor said?'

'No;' replied Laura.

'He said your brother Captain Seidlits is returned.'

'Yes—' said Laura, without any emotion.

'O merciful virgin!' cried Signora Sporza, bursting into tears, 'her sweet senses are gone;—she knows not what I say.'

What Laura heard, it appeared, made much less impression on her mind than what she saw; for she no sooner beheld Signora Sporza in tears, than she took hold of her hand, and with a look and tone of contrition, said, 'Woe is me! I fear I have offended you; truly, I meant it not.'

'I know you did not, my angel,' said Signora Sporza; 'but surely you remember Captain Seidlits.'

'Seidlits!' said Laura.

'Yes, my sweet friend, your brother,' rejoined Signora Sporza.

'My brother!' repeated Laura, with a vacant stare—'Where is my brother?'

'Here is your brother,' said Captain Seidlits, who, concealed by a skreen, had with impatience heard the con-

versation, and being no longer able to restrain his emotion, broke forth in this imprudent manner.

Laura screamed, and hid her face under the bed-clothes at his sudden appearance. 'My beloved sister,' said Seidlits, 'do you not know me?' Signora Sporza and the physician continuing to assure her that it was her brother, she raised her head, and looked with caution and an appearance of terror at Seidlits; she threw her eyes also around the room, as if she suspected that some other person was in it.

'There is nobody present but your friends, my love,' said Signora Sporza.

'I was afraid the wicked fiend had returned,' said Laura.

'There is no wicked fiend here, my love,' said Signora Sporza. 'This is your brother; you know him, do you not?'

'Surely you do, my dear,' said Seidlits, with a broken voice.

Laura then looked more attentively at him, then throwing her eyes on Signora Sporza, she pointed, with a smile, to Seidlits.

'Yes, my angel,' said Signora Sporza, 'that is your brother.'

Laura made no answer, but continued to look with complacency on Seidlits.

The name of brother affected her not; but seeing him seemed to give her an agreeable impression, without her being able to recollect his connection with herself; yet when addressing her in the most affectionate terms he held forth his hand to her, she gave him hers, and displayed not only evident marks of satisfaction while he remained, but also of uneasiness when he proposed to withdraw.*

* The author has been informed that this distinction between the effect of audible and of visible objects, has been criticised as unnatural. He is convinced, however, that he has observed it in people in the state of mind in which Laura is here represented, and in tracing it he endeavoured

Signora Sporza attended the captain out of the room, and Zeluco conducted both into an adjoining apartment.

'How strange,' said Zeluco, 'that she was no way affected when told that you were come?'

Seidlits made no answer, but wiped his eyes.

'Yet she seemed pleased at seeing you,' continued Zeluco.

Seidlits was absorbed in thought, and could not speak for some time; he at length said, addressing himself to Signora Sporza, 'She seemed in terror at first;—she certainly took me for some other person.—What did she mean by the wicked fiend?'

Zeluco anticipated the answer, saying, 'There is no knowing what she means,—her expressions are so extravagant,—she probably has no meaning; the severe shock she received by the sudden death of the dear child, has entirely deranged her memory and judgment; only conceive a woman of her great sensibility to see her child expire in her arms without any visible cause! for although the physician declares he has known many instances of infants carried off in the same sudden manner; yet her delicate constitution could not stand it;—but, thank heaven! she is better than she was; and the physician still hopes she will recover entirely.'

During this recital, Signora Sporza preserved a gloomy silence, but at one time shook her head in a manner which struck terror into the heart of Zeluco, and raised suspicions in the mind of Seidlits.

When he went to his lodgings he found Mr. N——— with Carlostein. It was not without difficulty and many interruptions that he gave them an account of Laura's si-

voured to copy faithfully from nature. Not to recur to the trite, though true, remark of

> Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
> Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus;

I conceive that the eye may continue to do its office of conveying intelligence to the mind, long after the latter has ceased to derive any information from words. The communication in the first case is natural and immediate. The second requires the intervention of a medium.

tuation. They were all so much affected that little conversation passed between them, and Seidlits retired without communicating even to Carlostein the doubts which he had on his mind.

When he called next morning to know how his sister was, he found an opportunity of speaking with Signora Sporza by herself. 'My dear madam,' said he, 'I beg you will let me know your real sentiments of this melancholy affair. I fear you conceal something.'

'I know nothing,' replied she, 'which I will not communicate to you.—I do not know what to think.—I left your sister and the child well; in a few hours I returned, and the child was dead, and your lovely sister thus; I then got the same account which you have heard.—We must take patience.—The physician is an honest man, and your sister grows a little better. I never quit her; —we must have patience.' Zeluco entering the room, prevented any farther conversation.

Laura seemed gradually and uniformly to grow better from the time that Seidlits arrived; but she recovered her bodily strength and looks in a greater proportion than she did her memory and judgment.

Carlostein meanwhile remained in the most agonizing state of suspense; his spirits rose or fell according to the accounts he received of her state of health from the physician, from Signora Sporza, and from his friend Seidlits; he was continually going from the one to the other; and when they were all engaged at the same time with Laura, he walked in sight of the house watching till one of them came out, that he might receive fresh intelligence on the only subject on which he could think or converse.

CHAPTER XCI.

O, it is monstrous!
Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it;
The winds did sing it to me.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE death of the child, the disorder of Laura, with the fears which oppressed the mind of Zeluco, lest the immediate cause of both should be suspected from the mysterious expressions of Laura, had so much engrossed his time, that it was not in his power to bestow much of his company on Nerina; he well knew that all the display of sorrow he made would be considered as mere grimace, and would even strengthen the suspicions which his personal safety rendered it so necessary for him to extinguish, if he were known to visit her at the very time he was affecting so much grief on account of the child's death and his wife's disorder. He therefore visited Nerina very seldom, and with the utmost secrecy.

This conduct, though prudent and expedient in Zeluco's situation, was highly offensive to Nerina, and all the apologies and explanations he was able to make could not persuade her to view it any other light.

It is true, she was not acquainted with the chief reason he had for observing this line of conduct; for although he had informed Nerina of the child's sudden death, and the effect it had produced on Laura, he was of too reserved and cautious a temper to intrust her with the original cause of both, which constantly preyed upon his mind, and filled him with increasing inquietude.

In one of his secret visits to her, she imputed the dejection of spirits which arose from those painful reflections, to grief for the death of his child; and considering this as an insult to her, she could not refrain from displaying her ill-humour.

'I cannot help thinking you one of the most fortunate men living,' said she to him.

'In what?' said he, a little surprised at the observation.

'Why, in getting so cleverly rid of a bastard,' replied she, 'who would have cut off great part of your fortune from your own children, if ever you have any.'

To this Zeluco making no reply, she proceeded.—'But although you have been so providentially freed from one, it would be wise in you to be a little more watchful in future; you may not get so quickly rid of the next.'

At this observation he fell into a fit of swearing.

'I am not surprised at your ill-humour,' continued she; 'it is to be sure a little provoking to have a wife who pretends to have lost her senses, and a brother-in-law so disagreeable to you, and so very agreeable to her, constantly at her bed-side.'

'Pretends,' cried Zeluco; 'can you conceive it is pretence?'

'Nay,' replied Nerina, 'you ought to be the best judge of your wife's sensibility; but one cannot help thinking it a little extraordinary that she should be so much affected with a loss which she can so readily supply.'

Zeluco poured fresh execrations on Laura and her brother, wishing he knew how to get quit of both.

'Contrive only to free yourself from *her*,' said Nerina, 'and you will be no longer troubled with *him*.'

'I shall never be freed from her,' said he, peevishly; 'she grows better instead of worse.'

'Do not despair,' cried Nerina, 'she may depart when it is least expected.'

'No.—She grows better, I tell you,' said Zeluco; 'there is no chance of her departure now.'

'There is one chance however,' said Nerina.

'What is that?' said Zeluco, eagerly.

'She may be snapt off in such a fit as the child was,' said Nerina.

At this random expression, the alarmed heart of Ze-

luco shrunk; he became pale as ashes, and staring wildly in a voice half suppressed, he uttered, 'What do you mean?'

'Mean!' said she, surprised at his emotion; 'What do *you* mean?—What in the name of wonder disturbs you?—Gracious heaven, how pale you are!—I do not know what I said.—What can be the matter with you?'

'I grew sick all of a sudden,' said he, recovering his presence of mind, 'but it is passing away already.'

'I hope it was nothing which I said that affected you so.'

'No; not in the least,' replied Zeluco, forcing a smile; 'I did not observe what you said:—I was thinking of something else;—but I have been subject of late to sickish qualms which invade me suddenly, and make me look very pale.'

'You never mentioned this to me before,' said Nerina.

'No assuredly,' said Zeluco; 'I hate to mention it to any body, or even to think of it.—Let us talk of something else.'

The usual consequence of vice was strongly felt by this unhappy man; though naturally bold and daring, the conscious guilt which hung upon his mind unmanned him to such a degree, that he was appalled at every accidental expression; and the constant uneasiness which this occasioned suggested fresh crimes to free him from the effects of the former.

In spite of all his endeavours against them he often fell into fits of musing while he remained with Nerina; when she accused him of this, and inquired into the cause of his dejection, he imputed it to a return of sickness; and on her stating this as a mere pretext to conceal the true cause, 'Why then,' said he, by way of pleasing her, and to prevent her farther inquiries, 'if you will have the truth, I am embarrassed with a wife, which puts it out of my power to devote my whole time and attention to her on whom my heart is fixed.'

'In her present situation,' said Nerina, 'if your wife really is in the state you seem to think, it were better for the woman herself that she were dead.'

'That may be,' said Zeluco; 'but she will not die a minute the sooner for that.'

'What is the physician's opinion?' resumed Nerina.

'It is impossible to know,' replied Zeluco; 'those fellows never give their real opinion.'

'I have no notion of employing a physician who will not give what opinion, and also what medicines are most expedient,' said Nerina.

To this strange speech Zeluco made no answer.

'What medicines *does* he give her?' resumed she.

'Upon my soul I never asked,' said Zeluco.

'Because,' resumed Nerina, 'I believe they give laudanum in such cases: I happened to know this by a singular accident enough; an acquaintance of mine was affected in the same way; she was ordered by a physician a certain number of drops every night; her maid, by mistake, gave a whole phial full, and she died next morning in the pleasantest way imaginable; her relations made a rout about it at first, but on calm reflection they were satisfied that in the patient's situation it was the luckiest accident that could have befallen her.'

Zeluco, without seeming to understand the import of this story, replied coldly, 'I shall leave the physician to treat his patient as he pleases.'

The constant terror under which Zeluco was, lest Laura, whether intentionally or not, should say any thing which might create suspicion against himself, was sufficient, independent of his absurd jealousy, to have converted his indifference for her into a rancorous hatred. He now wished for nothing more eagerly than her death, and the hint thrown out by Nerina was not lost on him; but as yet undetermined whether he should adopt it or not, he resolved, at all events, to act without a confident.

CHAPTER XCII.

——— Animum pictura pascit inani,
Multa gemens ———
Dum stupet, obtutuque hæret defixus in uno.
VIRG.

In the meantime Laura seemed somewhat better; she had been free from lethargic stupor and faintings for a considerable interval, but still continued languid and dejected, and was in general silent: sometimes she shed tears, and without any obvious cause; at other times she seemed tolerably cheerful, particularly when her brother entered her room; her bodily health upon the whole was greatly better, but her memory and understanding continued impaired: she never inquired for any body, nor seemed to recollect that they existed till they appeared before her, on which it was evident whom she preferred; when she spoke, it was always in short and unconnected sentences.

Madame de Seidlits's indisposition confined her almost constantly to her chamber, so that Signora Sporza, Captain Seidlits, and her maids, were the only persons besides the physician whom Laura saw.

One morning after Zeluco had rode out, Signora Sporza and Seidlits, by the physician's permission, conducted Laura from her own apartment to a higher chamber, from whence there was a very commanding prospect. She sat for some time at the window, looking with complacency at the beautiful and varied scenery before her eyes, while Seidlits pointed out the particular objects. Both he and Signora Sporza were delighted with the composure of mind which Laura retained on this occasion.

She then rose and walked about the room, till a picture which hung on the wall engaged her attention: the subject was the Massacre of the Innocents.—The instant that she perceived it, she started and betrayed great emotion, but her eyes soon were rivetted on one particular

group; it consisted of a mother struggling with a fierce soldier, who with one hand aimed a poignard at her infant, while with the other he grasped the child by the throat.

When Signora Sporza perceived what peculiarly engrossed Laura's attention, she endeavoured to remove her from the picture: it was not in her power. Laura was fascinated to the spot; she held her friend with a rigid grasp, while, with her face projected, her eyes devoured the group. 'What is the meaning of this? what alarms you, my sister?' cried Seidlits. Laura turned to him with a distracted glance, and then pointing with her finger to the assassin who grasped the child, she cried with a voice of wildness and terror,—'Look!—look!'—and being immediately seized with convulsions, she was in that state carried to bed.

The physician prescribed some calming medicines, notwithstanding which the convulsions and spasms continued at intervals for near two hours, when they abated, and she fell into a slumber.

When Captain Seidlits understood that Laura was in this state, he had the curiosity to return to the room in which she was taken ill; and Signora Sporza, excited by the same curiosity, left her friend for a few minutes and followed him. She found Seidlits examining the picture; it happened by a singular coincidence, that the face of the assassinating soldier had some resemblance to that of Zeluco. Signora Sporza had not looked long at the picture till she observed it; 'Almighty Providence,' exclaimed she; 'how is this?' and then she looked at Captain Seidlits.

'It is certainly so,' said he; 'I am quite of your opinion.'

'What, you perceive a likeness?' resumed she.

'A most diabolic likeness,' answered Seidlits.

'But the subject was what first attracted her notice,' continued Signora Sporza.

'Which confirms my suspicions,' said he, 'that this ac-

cursed villain——' As Seidlits raised his voice, Signora Sporza clapping her hand on his mouth, begged him to be more temperate. After some conversation they agreed in the propriety of concealing their sentiments, till they could get more light into a matter so mysterious, and which gave birth to ideas so horrid: Captain Seidlits gave her his promise to take no step without acquainting her, and she assured him of all the assistance she could give in his endeavours to get at the truth.

But their mutual efforts to this purpose were suspended by the increasing danger of Laura; the slumber in which they left her did not continue long; she was restless, uneasy, and feverish in the night; the feverish symptoms augmented next day, she was delirious the whole of the following night, and was for three days in such imminent danger that all her attendants *dreaded*, and her husband *hoped*, that she would expire: but all at once, when she seemed at the height of danger, she fell into a profound calm and long-continued sleep, at the end of which she awoke entirely free from fever, and with her memory and senses restored.

The joy of Signora Sporza and Captain Seidlits on this happy event was somewhat mitigated by the fear that Laura's memory being now returned, a recollection of the child's death, and the circumstances attending it, might produce a relapse; but whether it was the natural consequence of that languor to which the fever reduced Laura, or whatever else was the cause, certain it is that she bore the recollection of the scene which first occasioned her illness with diminished sensibility; her sorrow was accompanied with none of those violent effects, but seemed to be all at once mellowed into a calm uniform melancholy: and the physician gave the most flattering hopes of the full restoration of her strength and spirits, desiring at the same time that nothing should be said during her convalescence which alluded to her child.

Laura herself perceived that every allusion of that nature was carefully avoided; but one day when Signora

Sporza was with her alone, she asked, how her poor mother had borne the shock of the child's death; and put several other questions to Signora Sporza, respecting the interment of the infant; during the recital, which was given in consequence of those inquiries, she wept abundantly, but soon wiping away her tears, she said, 'Why should I be grieved for my child? he has escaped many evils to which he must have been exposed had he lived; some of them of more importance than that of dying; but his future happiness is now secure.'

Signora Sporza finding, to her great surprise and satisfaction, that she could speak with such serenity on this subject, took occasion sometime after to ask Laura, what she thought gave occasion to the *convulsions* of which the infant died. From this question Laura conceived at once what account Zeluco had given of that transaction, and from Signora Sporza's manner, as well as from her subsequent inquiries, Laura also perceived that her friend had suspicions that his account was not exactly true. To these inquiries she answered, that it was impossible for her to tell what was the cause of such fits, but she had often heard that infants were liable to them from various causes; and by her manner she plainly shewed that she was not inclined to speak more fully on the subject. Laura knew that she was the only witness of the child's death, and although she had come to a resolution to take measures for being for ever separated from her husband, she was equally determined not to appear herself, or put it in the power of any other person to appear as his accuser.

During all the time that Laura was disordered Zeluco had kept out of her sight, on the pretence that he could not bear to see one so dear to him in that melancholy state; the real reason was, his dreading that she would discover symptoms of horror, and thereby give rise to suspicions which he was most solicitous to prevent.

As she was now, to his great sorrow, much better in her bodily health, and not at all disordered in other respects, he thought it would seem very singular for him to delay

seeing her any longer; but being willing to sound her own inclination in the first place, he told the physician he was impatient to see his beloved wife, but would not till he should know from him if he could with safety. The physician mentioned this to Laura, who immediately declared that she could not as yet bear the company or conversation of any body, except that of her mother, who was now somewhat better, or of Signora Sporza; that even their's, when unusually prolonged, occasioned head-ach and feverishness; she begged, therefore, that no other, not even her brother, or husband, would think of visiting her till she was stronger. Laura had added her brother, whom she had not seen since the picture scene, to render the exclusion of her husband the less extraordinary.

Ever since her mind had recovered its powers, Laura had been reflecting how she ought to proceed in order to obtain a separation from her husband with the least possible eclat or other disagreeable circumstance; having resolved to conceal her principal reason, she did not choose to consult with her mother, brother, or Signora Sporza, till she had tried what effect an application to Zeluco himself would have.—What the physician told her rendered her impatient to make this trial. Having written the following letter, therefore, she sent it to her husband, when she knew he was alone in his own apartment.—

'To Signor Zeluco.

'You cannot be surprised, or sorry to be informed, that it is my unalterable resolution never to see you more.

'I am the only witness of the horrid deed.

'I have mentioned it to no mortal, nor ever shall, unless forced by your refusal to comply with my proposal, or by madness, which a sight of you might again drive me into.

'The plan of separation shall be proposed by me to my friends, and on a pretext which cannot affect you; all I require is your concurrence that it may take place without noise or difficulty.

'I demand no settlement,—but shall delay mentioning this affair to my relations till my mother's health is a little better established, which there is every appearance will be very soon.

'Do not think of turning me from my purpose; the attempt alone will involve you in trouble.

'I desire no answer but a simple assent; and shall ever pray that the mercy of heaven may be extended to you.

'LAURA SEIDLITZ.'

Zeluco was preparing to go abroad when he received this letter; he changed his purpose, and remained in his apartment the whole day.

He was at first so much exasperated, that he had thoughts of bursting into Laura's apartment, demanding an explanation of what she had written, with a view of intimidating her into silence, by threats of confining her for life as a distracted woman, if she dared to accuse him. But a very little reflection convinced him of the danger such a measure would be attended with; besides, he saw that no colouring of his would efface the impression which her story, if she was forced to unfold it, must make on a public by no means disposed to think with partiality of him. Zeluco, therefore, determined on this occasion to bridle the impetuosity of his rage, and make both his pride and humour obey the dictates of prudence; he relinquished every openly violent measure, and sent the following answer to Laura.—

'Although I understand not what some parts of your letter allude to, I agree to your proposal of separation: when you mention this matter to your relations, you will let them know that although this proceeds entirely from a piece of humour of your own, unsought by me, yet I am willing to give you a reasonable annuity for life.'

Laura was greatly pleased with this answer; she was resolved to accept of no settlement from Zeluco, but thought it best to say nothing on that head, till she

should remove from his house. She herself would have preferred returning to Germany, had she not feared it would be disagreeable to her mother, and had she not mistrusted her own heart, which she was conscious suggested that measure from partiality to Carlostein. The plan, therefore, which she resolved to adopt immediately after the separation was, to take refuge for some time at least in a convent at Naples, or perhaps at Rome or Florence, where she could board at a very moderate expense; and having determined to acquaint no mortal with the chief reason of this separation, she expected to meet with difficulty in convincing her mother of its propriety; and therefore she watched the advance of her health, that she might mention it at a time when she would suffer little from the uneasiness it would give her.

CHAPTER XCIII.

Me, me, (adsum qui feci), in me convertite ferrum,
VIRG.

CAPTAIN SEIDLITS informed his friend Carlostein of the effect which the sight of the picture had on Laura; also of his own and Signora Sporza's suspicions relating to the child's death and the mother's illness, which suspicions acquired new strength from the second illness of Laura, and the singular manner in which it had originated. While Laura continued in danger, the minds of her relations were so much agitated, that they could think of nothing else; but when the danger was over, and it appeared that the crisis of the fever had not only thrown off the bodily disease but also the mental disorder, Seidlits resumed his conferences with Carlostein respecting the mysterious circumstances which accompanied the child's death, and had occurred since; and Carlostein expressing a great desire to see the picture, Seidlits conducted him one day to the room in which it hung.

'There is the villain!' said Seidlits, pointing to the figure of the soldier with the poignard. 'Observe with

what fury he aims at the child.'——Carlostein continued to examine the group with silent attention.

'It is true,' resumed Seidlits, 'that there was no wound on the body of my sister's infant.'

'But observe,' said Carlostein, 'with what force the murderer *grasps* that child by the throat.'

'Do you not see the resemblance which strikes Signora Sporza?' continued Seidlits, not having perceived the import of Carlostein's remark.

'Yes; I perceive something of that nature; not a great deal however,' answered Carlostein, who already repented of the insinuation which had escaped him, for he wished not to strengthen his friend's suspicions without stronger evidence.

'The resemblance seems to me very evident,' said Seidlits.

'Perhaps there is some resemblance,' added Carlostein; 'such things occur often enough.'

'Do you not think it would strike the villain himself, were he to see it?' said Seidlits.

'I should think not,' replied Carlostein, who dreaded the consequence of his friend's retaining that idea.

'Pray lend me your pencil,' said Seidlits; 'it *shall* strike him, by heaven! if he ever looks at it.'

He immediately wrote over the figure of the soldier, the name of *Zeluco*.—'There,' said he, 'now, it will be impossible for him to mistake his representative.'

Carlostein endeavoured to prevail upon his friend to obliterate what he had written; but finding him obstinate, he determined to get Signora Sporza to do it before there was any probability of Zeluco's entering that room.

As Carlostein and Seidlits walked out of the court, they met Zeluco. Carlostein having received the pencil, still held it in his hand, but seeing his friend's eyes kindle at the approach of Zeluco, he whispered, 'Pray, say nothing to him at present.'—'I must give him a slight hint,' replied Seidlits; and then said aloud to Zeluco,

'We were examining the picture, signor, which affected my sister so violently.'

'What picture?' said Zeluco. 'I know nothing of a picture.'

Signora Sporza had concealed that incident carefully from him; having only informed him that Laura had relapsed suddenly, without mentioning the cause.

'By much the most interesting piece in your collection,' replied Seidlits; 'it had almost proved fatal to your wife: pray examine it carefully, and when we next meet, I shall be glad to know how you relish it.' Having said this, Seidlits walked on, and Carlostein whispered Zeluco, 'There is a name written *with this pencil* over the principal figure; if you wish for any farther ecclaircissement, apply to me.—I shall be at home in less than an hour, and ready to give you whatever satisfaction you desire.'

Carlostein was fully persuaded that the consequence of Zeluco's looking at the picture, with the style in which Seidlits had directed him to it, must be a personal quarrel between them; he knew that Laura dreaded nothing more than such an event, and well remembered with what earnestness she had entreated him, if he should ever see any appearance of that kind, to do every thing in his power to prevent it. She had once said, talking on that subject to Signora Sporza, that she would consider this as the greatest obligation that any person could confer upon her. He had accordingly endeavoured as much as he could to prevail on Seidlits to obliterate the name; he had resolved to write to Signora Sporza to do what Seidlits refused; and he had tried to prevent Seidlits from addressing Zeluco in the manner he did. Having failed in all, he saw no means of obviating a personal contest between the husband and brother of Laura, but by drawing the resentment of Zeluco from Seidlits to himself; this having struck him instantly, he whispered Zeluco as has been mentioned.

Carlostein had also another reason for being solicitous to prevent Seidlits from meeting Zeluco in the field; he

knew the latter to be far more skilful and expert in the use of the small sword than his friend. He had often seen them fence together, and Zeluco had an evident superiority even when he did not exert his whole powers. Although Seidlits had been as fully convinced of this as his friend, which he was not, it would, on the present occasion, have had no weight with them. Pistols were out of the question, no such weapon being used in affairs of this nature in Italy. Carlostein imagined himself rather a more skilful fencer than Seidlits, though conscious of being by much inferior to Zeluco, who was accounted one of the best in the kingdom of Naples.

When the two friends had walked a little way after quitting Zeluco, Seidlits turning round to Carlostein, who followed him, said, 'I shall certainly hear from him this afternoon or to-morrow.'

'I dare swear,' answered Carlostein, 'he will take till to-morrow to consider in what manner he is to ask an explanation of the words which you addressed to him.'

'I shall give him a very brief and clear explanation whenever he does,' said Seidlits.

'Suppose,' resumed Carlostein, 'he should be able to explain to your satisfaction the circumstances which seem so dismally mysterious to us.'

'I shall make an apology without hesitation,' said Seidlits. 'But you will *attend me* in case we do go out?'

'Of course,' replied Carlostein. 'If I remember, you are engaged to dinner at our minister's.—You go, I suppose?'

'I cannot do otherwise,' said Seidlits; 'but I will leave word with Targe to bring me any message.'

'I am convinced you will have none before to-morrow,' rejoined Carlostein; 'and if no accommodation takes place, you will probably arrange matters for the following morning:—at all events, I shall have a post-chaise prepared to carry you directly to the ecclesiastical state.'

'Pray do,' said Seidlits, 'for I am confident I shall do his business for all his vaunted skill:—there is some dif-

ference between a foil and a sword. Adieu, I must dress for dinner.—You dine with Mr. N——, do you not?'

'I do,' replied Carlostein; 'but we shall meet in the evening.' They separated.

Zeluco had observed something fierce and menacing in the countenances both of Carlostein and Seidlits; he was much more surprised at this in the former than in the latter, because Carlostein and he had always been, apparently at least, on the most friendly footing. He could not comprehend the import of what was said by either. On going up stairs, he demanded of one of Laura's maids, in what room her mistress was when she was last taken ill. On entering the room, he threw his eyes in a cursory manner over the pictures, but the moment he perceived the massacre of the innocents, his heart shrunk within him, and he was convinced that this must be the piece in question: with a trembling step he approached nearer to the picture, and having distinguished the soldier grasping the neck of the child, he started back, as if the poignard had been aimed at his own breast:—after a pause, he advanced again, forcing his averted eyes once more on the picture, and with horror and dismay observed his own name inscribed over the head of the soldier.

Perplexed, confounded, and terrified, he shrunk down upon a chair, and as soon as he was able to walk, he stole down stairs, and shut himself up in his own apartment.

He had promised to pass that evening with Nerina, but finding himself in a state of such perturbation, quite undetermined what measures to adopt, not daring to inform her or any other person of the cause of his perplexity; he sent a verbal message by the servant usually employed by them, importing, that he was taken suddenly ill, and therefore could not possibly wait on her at the appointed time; but if he found himself better, he should have that pleasure the following evening.

Having dismissed the footman with this message, he continued in painful reflection on these extraordinary incidents; he could no longer doubt of both Seidlits and

Carlostein's having strong suspicions of his being the cause of the child's death and Laura's illness: he was impressed also with the notion that those suspicions were conveyed to them by Laura, either designedly, when she recovered her memory, or undesignedly, during the ravings of her disorder: in either case she was the object of his undistinguishing vengeance.

His former plan of treating her as a mad woman, he saw would not be of any use now, when, to his infinite mortification, she was perfectly recovered. He felt the necessity under which he was to demand an explanation of Seidlits and Carlostein. As the expressions which Carlostein had whispered were the most direct and pointed, he resolved to begin with him. Yet should the effect of this be a duel, he plainly saw, that by attracting the public attention, and exciting inquiries, it would produce a great many of those consequences he so anxiously wished to prevent.

In this state of hesitation and direful perplexity, how often did this wretched man wish for a friend to whom he could with safety unbosom himself, and from whom he might receive counsel and consolation! but having in the whole course of his life been the friend of no man, he well knew that no man was his friend. He could hardly meet an eye even in his own family, which he did not suspect of looking on him with aversion, either from love for Laura, or direct hatred for him.

After weighing all the difficulties and dangers, a great choice of which presented themselves to his mind, he could form no fixed plan of future conduct, but in the meantime thought himself absolutely bound without farther hesitation to go and talk to Carlostein.

In all cases where he was not disturbed by conscience, which makes cowards of us all, Zeluco had less personal fear than most people; but as he was equally devoid of principle, his notions on the subject of duelling were somewhat singular.

One of his maxims was, that a man who injured ano-

ther might, consistent with good sense, and ought, from a regard to his own character, to fight the person he had injured, the moment he was required; but he thought it in the highest degree silly and absurd in the injured person take to such a dangerous and precarious method of obtaining reparation; justice and common sense would dictate, he imagined, some more certain plan of vengeance, except indeed the injury was known to the public, or of a nature which admitted of no delay. In such cases, a regard to the world's opinion superseded every other consideration. His present business with Carlostein he considered in this last class; he had no doubt of Carlostein's having communicated to Seidlits and to others what he had whispered to himself: therefore, notwithstanding that he considered himself as the injured person, not the injurer, he thought it incumbent on him to demand an explanation in the usual mode; being determined however not to bring matters to the last extremity, if he could find any plausible means of avoiding it; not that he feared the issue of the duel, being too confident in his own skill to harbour any doubt; but merely because he wished, if possible, to avoid every measure which might tend to make an eclat, or lead to inquiries into the cause of the quarrel.

CHAPTER XCIV.

> What stronger breast-plate than a heart untainted?
> Thrice is he arm'd that has his quarrel just;
> And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,
> Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

ZELUCO found Carlostein, as he expected, alone. 'You will not be surprised at seeing me, sir, after your late behaviour,' said Zeluco.

'I am not surprised,' replied Carlostein.

'You promised me an explanation,' added Zeluco.

'Propose your difficulty,' rejoined Carlostein, 'and you'll find me as good as my word.'

'I was desired to examine a picture,' said Zeluco, fiercely.

'Which I presume you have done,' added Carlostein, with calmness.

'I *have*,' answered Zeluco; 'and I find somebody has had the insolence to inscribe my name over one of the figures.'

'You could not miss it,' said Carlostein; 'it was very distinctly written with this pencil;' taking the pencil out of his pocket;—'but there was no insolence intended.'

'What was intended then?' said Zeluco, in somewhat of a milder tone, for he began to imagine that Carlostein meant to explain it in a friendly or jocular manner.

'It was intended,' replied Carlostein, in a sedate and solemn accent, 'to signify the conformity of character and conduct between you and a murderer.'

This answer, being rather unexpected, disconcerted Zeluco a little; but recovering himself, he said, 'You can have but one meaning by such behaviour, sir; I expect you will meet me to-morrow morning.'

'Wherever you are pleased to appoint,' said Carlostein.

After some farther conversation, they agreed to meet at a remote spot which happened to be near the villa where Nerina dwelt, and at an early hour; each to be attended by a friend.

'I presume,' said Zeluco, 'Captain Seidlits will accompany you.'

'He is the very last man I should think of on this occasion; neither Captain Seidlits, nor any other person, except the gentleman who *is* to attend me, shall know of what has passed between us; for this I pledge my honour.' As Carlostein pronounced the last sentence, he looked at Zeluco as if he expected an assurance to the same purpose from him.

'None but a coward would act otherwise,' said Zeluco.

'It is well,' said Carlostein. 'Now, signor, your weapon?'

'The sword, unquestionably,' replied Zeluco.

'Although you are the challenger, and I am not ignorant of your dexterity at that particular weapon, I agree,' said Carlostein.

'If you have any objection to the weapon of a gentleman, you should have thought of it before you insulted one,' said Zeluco.

'I have told you,' said Carlostein, 'that I agree.'

Immediately on their separating, Carlostein informed Mr. N—— of all that had passed; and asked the favour of his accompanying him to the place of rendezvous.

Mr. N—— accepted the invitation, after having expressed his admiration of the generous conduct of Carlostein; for he plainly perceived, notwithstanding Carlostein's having passed over that circumstance, that he had provoked the quarrel to prevent Seidlits from being engaged in it. Carlostein begged that he would let nothing escape him, in case of his meeting Seidlits, that could give him any suspicion of what was intended. Mr. N—— assured him he would be on his guard. 'But I am afraid,' added he, 'that, by your eagerness to prevent Laura from the danger of losing a brother, you expose her to a misfortune which she will feel with still severer anguish.'

Carlostein made no other answer to this observation of Mr. N——'s, than a gentle inclination of the head.

The generous friendship of Mr. N—— for Carlostein was increased, and not diminished, by the great regard which he had long observed Laura had for him. What gave him most uneasiness in the business of the following morning was, the fear of any fatal accident happening to Carlostein, which, although he should regret on his own account, he was of a character to regret doubly on account of the affliction it would occasion to Laura.

When Carlostein met Seidlits in the evening, he told him, that he had as yet heard nothing from Zeluco.

Carlostein answered, that he was convinced there would be no message till next day: 'Indeed,' added he, 'I think you had best keep out of his way for this evening; let him digest what he has already got, before you give him any new provocation.'

'If a sight of me disturbs his digestion,' said Seidlits, 'he must keep out of my way, for I shall certainly take no pains to keep out of his; nor will I circumscribe my walks or visits on account of any man alive.'

'I only meant for this evening,' rejoined Carlostein.

'Well,' interrupted Seidlits, 'if he wishes not to meet me this evening, he had best not appear at the Corso; for I am engaged with some company there about this time, and shall go directly; perhaps you will go with me. —Carlostein excused himself, after begging of his friend to return soon to their lodgings. He was particularly solicitous to prevent Seidlits from meeting with Zeluco that evening, foreseeing that it might entirely defeat the plan he had already settled for the next morning.

In the meanwhile, Zeluco, wishing to conceal the source of this dispute as long as possible, did not choose to apply to any person acquainted with Seidlits or Laura to accompany him next morning, lest they should make inquiries which he might not choose to answer; he therefore waited on Bertram the Genevois, and as an old brother officer, and a person of whose gallant spirit he had an high opinion, begged he would accompany him the following morning on an affair of honour with a foreign officer, who, he said, had insulted him.

Bertram hesitated, and expressed a desire of knowing the particulars of the quarrel; 'Is there no possibility,' said he, 'of accommodating the affair?'

Zeluco assured him he had been insulted in such a manner as no gentleman could bear, without a very ample apology; and then, to prevent his insisting on knowing the particulars, added, 'If my antagonist agrees to make

such an apology as you shall think sufficient, I assure you that it shall satisfy me.'

Bertram then consented, in the hope that it would be in his power to bring the affair to an amicable termination. On being informed of the place, he recollected it perfectly, having frequently taken notice of it during the various excursions which he had made since his arrival at Naples; and he promised to call on Zeluco precisely at the hour appointed.

When Zeluco returned home he found the following letter from Nerina.—

'Merciful Heaven! what is the matter with you? What am I to think of a verbal message of such cruel import? Do you not know how my soul doats on you? Do you not know how miserably I pass the lingering moments which cruel fate obliges me to spend out of your company? —Or, are you so ill that you cannot write?—Ah! let me not palliate your conduct by a supposition which would render me more wretched than even your neglect. No; let me be blest in the certainty of your recovery; and I will endeavour to support whatever other misfortune may befal me. Let me know by the bearer at what hour I may expect you to-morrow. But I earnestly entreat, that no consideration, which solely regards me, may induce you to venture out sooner than it can be done with safety to your health, that I may not purchase a transient happiness at the price of a whole life of despair. Alas! why am I not permitted to tend you, to watch you through the sleepless night, and endeavour to cheer the gloom of sickness; that were happiness indeed, when compared to the tortures of absence and uncertainty. Write, or rather let your valet write, a short line to the wretched

'NERINA'

Zeluco was himself a great dissembler, exceedingly profuse in compliments and professions of attachment, naturally suspicious, and generally acute in discovering the con-

cealed motives and designs of others; yet the cajoleries of this woman lulled his usual diffidence, and his penetration was the dupe of his vanity.

Had he seen such a letter as this from any woman to another man, he would have been instantly convinced that the artful effusion was dictated by affected, not real passion; and he would have considered it as weakness and vanity in any man to be imposed upon by it for a moment; yet such is the fascination of self-love, that he thought the same sentiments sincere and natural when he was himself their object, that he would have considered as extravagant and deceitful, had they been addressed to another man. His answer was couched in the following words.—

'MY DEAREST NERINA,

'Make yourself easy—I am somewhat better already. Your affectionate letter has contributed to my recovery. When my servant left me, I could not write without pain; but had I thought of the uneasiness which the omission would give you, I should not have permitted him to return without a letter. I may possibly have it in my power to wait on you to-morrow at dinner, certainly not sooner; at any rate you will hear from me, and you need not expect me, nor send any message till then. I remain most affectionately, yours, &c. &c.'

CHAPTER XCV.

——— quo modo adolescentulus
Meretricum ingenia et mores posset noscere:
Mature ut cum cognorit, perpetuo oderit.

TERENT.

IMMEDIATELY after engaging Bertram to accompany him to the field, Zeluco took precautions to insure his own escape out of the kingdom of Naples, in case it should be necessary; he next employed himself in burning certain papers, and in arranging others; and having prepared

whatever he thought necessary, and given orders to his servant at what hour to call him in the morning, he went to bed in the hope of being refreshed by sleep before his meeting with Carlostein; but such a tempest of distracting thoughts rushed on his mind as totally deprived him of repose. The violent impression which the sight of the painted murderer of a child had made on Laura, with which he thought even her maids were acquainted, was sufficient to create a pretty general suspicion of the real fact. What had been written to him by Laura, strongly hinted by Seidlits, and directly asserted by Carlostein, were evidences that they all believed him to be accessary to the death of the child. And he often cursed the unlucky incidents by which, while he was projecting a scheme of secure revenge against his wife and her brother, he found himself unavoidably engaged in a contest, on equal terms, with a third person, against whom he never before had harboured any enmity. In the event of his killing Carlostein, of which he had little doubt, it struck him that Laura, or perhaps her brother, might during his absence mention such circumstances relative to the child's death, as would give the public an impression against him, which they themselves, should they be so inclined afterwards, might not be able to efface.

This idea prompted him to rise and to write a letter addressed to Laura, in which he cautioned her in general terms not to allow any expression to escape her which might injure him during his temporary absence; and advising her to admonish her brother to the same effect; for that any thing of that nature would prove ruinous to themselves, and would most materially injure her mother. This letter he sealed and put into his pocket, intending to send it to her from the field, in case it should be necessary after his business with Carlostein was over.

The picture and the inscription came next into his recollection; he had already locked the door of the room, and put the key into his escritoir; but now, all the fami-

ly being asleep, he stole again to the room, unfixed the picture from the wall, brought it into his own bedchamber, and burnt it to ashes.

He threw himself again into his bed, but with as little success as before; a retrospect of his past life, which obtruded itself upon his mind in spite of all his endeavours to exclude it, and the dread of the world's soon reviewing it in the same light that he himself did, with a confused prospect of consequences, which he dreaded without knowing how to prevent, banished sleep from his pillow. He rose, and walked with precipitation about his chamber, as if he could have dissipated the uneasiness of his mind by the agitation of his body. Nerina's letter lay on the table—he read it once more, and with redoubled complacency.—Convinced of the sincerity of *her* attachment, he could not flatter himself with the friendship of another person on earth:—in moments of difficulty and distress, it is natural for the most arrogant and stubborn of the human race to wish for the support of friendship and of love, however powerless the person is in whose breast they reside. There was yet an interval of two or three hours to the time at which Bertram was to call for him. In the state of anxiety and impatience in which Zeluco was, it appeared an age.

> With what a leaden and retarding weight
> Does expectation load the wings of time? *

This fine observation of the poet is not only highly applicable where he places it, but is also just when the mind is agitated with the thoughts of any important event which we know to be unavoidable, and have no hopes of tranquillity till it has taken place. Zeluco had sometimes found that Nerina had the art of unloading the wings of time; and being seized with an irresistible desire of passing the interval till he should meet Carlostein with her, he ordered his horses to be got ready, and wrote the following note directed to Bertram.—

* Mason.

'DEAR BERTRAM,

'I have ordered two horses to be ready, one for you, the other for the servant, who will deliver you this, and then accompany you to the appointed place, where you will find me waiting your arrival. I will then inform you why I set out before you. I am your assured friend, and obliged servant,

'ZELUCO.'

Having given the necessary directions to the servant who waited for Bertram, he set out, attended by another servant, for the habitation of Nerina, where he arrived a little after day-break.

Confident of a cordial welcome at all hours, he entered without knocking by the means of a key which he kept for that purpose. Being obliged to pass through the parlour in his way to the bedchamber of Nerina, he was somewhat surprised to find her maid up at so early an hour. The maid was still more surprised at seeing him. He asked how her mistress was, and without waiting for her answer, walked towards Nerina's chamber.

'Maria Virgine!' cried the maid, running between him and the door.

'What is the matter?' said Zeluco.

'Lord, sir!' cried the maid, 'you cannot see my mistress at present.'

'Why not?'

'Dear sir,' replied the maid, 'only stay in the parlour, till I acquaint my mistress that you are here.'

'Paha!' said Zeluco, pushing her aside.

'O Lord, sir!' cried the maid, taking hold of his coat, 'you will terrify my mistress out of her senses, if you go in to her at this unseasonable hour.'

'Get along,' said Zeluco, shaking her from him.

'My mistress is indisposed, sir; she is extremely ill,' said the maid.

'Ill!' cried Zeluco.

'Yes,' said the maid, 'she has been exceedingly ill these two days.'

'She did not mention that in the letter I received from er yesterday.'

'No! that is very odd, indeed,' cried the maid, 'but she has forgot it; for you know my mistress sometimes has but an indifferent memory. Pray, sir, be so obliging as to return to the parlour, till I inform my mistress that you are come; when I have informed her, I dare swear she will be very happy to see you. But——'

'Peace, babbler,' cried Zeluco, pushing her aside, and walking through the passage towards Nerina's bedchamber.

'Pray, Signor Zeluco, stay in the parlour; indeed, Signor Zeluco, you'll frighten my mistress,—dear Signor Zeluco,—I protest, Signor Zeluco,' following him through the passage, and raising her voice louder and louder; but perceiving him pushing with violence at the door of the bedchamber, she screamed, 'O, my poor mistress will be murdered,' and immediately the voice of Nerina was heard from within, shrieking and crying out, 'murder! rape! murder! villain! monster, begone!'

Zeluco drew his sword, drove the door open with a violent kick of his foot, and to his utter astonishment, saw a man, half-dressed, standing by the bed of Nerina.

'What is your business here, scoundrel?' cried Zeluco, furious with rage, and making a push at him with his sword.

The fellow very dexterously put the sword aside with one hand, plunged a stiletto into the bowels of Zeluco with the other, and made his escape.

Zeluco fell to the ground.

Nerina, who had continued screaming from the bed, seeing Zeluco fall, sprang up, exclaiming, 'Oh, the villain has murdered my dear lord,' kneeling down by him, and offering her aid.

'Be gone, perfidious wretch!' said Zeluco, with a faint voice.

With loud lamentations she took all the saints of heaven, with the angels and blessed martyrs, to witness that she was as innocent as the chaste Susanna, or the Holy Virgin herself; for that the villain had concealed himself in her chamber, with an intention to rob or murder her; and that being awaked by the voice of her maid in the passage, she had perceived him for the first time, and instantly cried out.

Zeluco, without seeming to regard her, desired the maid to call in his own servant.

As soon as with his assistance he was placed on the bed, a message was dispatched to Naples for surgeons.

The man who stabbed Zeluco, we had not occasion to mention before, although he was an old acquaintance of Nerina's. He was originally a rope-dancer; she had first seen him at Venice, where he was greatly admired for his shape, strength, and agility. She found means to prevail on him to quit his profession, and attach himself entirely to her service; he had come with her first to Rome, where he attended her as a servant out of livery, and afterwards accompanied her to Naples. Zeluco soon after his connection with Nerina, saw something in this man's appearance which he did not relish; and he gave her a hint to that effect. Nerina instantly dismissed him with such an air of indifference, as dissipated certain ideas which began to arise in the suspicious mind of Zeluco. The dismission however was of little importance; the man remained secretly at Naples, and was admitted to the bedchamber of Nerina, when she thought herself secure of not being visited by Zeluco: those interviews were unknown to all the servants except Nerina's confidential maid, who was actually sitting up for the purpose of letting him out before the other servants should get up, when Zeluco entered so unexpectedly.

When Nerina heard the voice of her maid, she comprehended the reasons of her noisy remonstrances, and perceiving that Zeluco was breaking into the room, she instantly formed a resolution worthy of her abandoned cha-

racter: she screamed and accused her paramour of violence, with a view to convince Zeluco of her own innocence, and instigate him to put the man to death as a housebreaker. The scene however took a different turn, and Zeluco saw the whole in a true point of view.

When the person who was sent to Naples for the surgeons was returning, he met Bertram, who had just mounted his horse, and, accompanied by the other servant, was going to the rendezvous: this person knowing Zeluco's servant, informed him of the misfortune which had happened to his master. Bertram desired to be conducted as fast as possible to the house where Zeluco lay.

They overtook Carlostein and Mr. N——, who were riding to the appointed place. Bertram informed Mr. N—— of what he had just heard, and they all rode to the dwelling of Nerina.

Carlostein and Mr. N—— remained in the parlour, while Bertram introduced the surgeon and his assistant into the room in which Zeluco was. He stretched forth his hand to Bertram, saying, 'I am glad to see you; when my wound has been examined, I wish to have some conversation with you. In the meantime,' added he, pointing to Nerina, 'let that woman be secured and kept separate from her maid; she is the cause of what has happened.'

Zeluco had kept his own servant by him from the time he received the would till Bertram with the others arrived; Nerina had also remained constantly in the room, and had often renewed her lamentations. Zeluco took no other notice of her, than by begging of her not to make a noise, for he was in great pain. His eyes were now open to her true character, and she attempted in vain to deceive him any more; yet he explained himself only by keeping a steady silence till Bertram came.

A more unpleasant party than this must have been, can hardly be conceived, consisting of Zeluco lying wounded on the bed of Nerina; Nerina herself in the most agonis-

ing state of suspense. The servant of Zeluco was the only person of the company tolerably at his ease, and *he* was rather anxious that his master should die, that he might be relieved from a troublesome attendance; and that Nerina, whom he heartily hated, might be hanged.

But when she heard herself so plainly accused by Zeluco, in the directions he addressed to Bertram, she began to vindicate her innocence with all that violence of vociferation which so often attends guilt. Being forced out of the room by the company, she and her maid were secured in separate chambers.

Zeluco suffered great pain while the state of his wound was examined; after dressing it, however, the surgeon gave him hopes of recovery, but declared it necessary that he should be kept quiet, which, as he found himself easier and inclined to sleep after the dressing, Zeluco agreed to. He earnestly begged of Bertram not to leave the house, who assuring him he had no such intentions, they all left the room except one servant.

Bertram then joined Mr. N—— and Carlostein in the parlour, with the surgeon, who was the same that had formerly attended Zeluco. He spoke more dubiously of his recovery to these gentlemen than he had done to the patient himself; and leaving an assistant to be at hand in case of accidents, he set out for Naples, promising to return in the morning.

Bertram, with a frankness which belonged to his character, and which was encouraged by the appearance and manners of Carlostein, informed him by what accident he himself came there, and of the whole of his connection with Zeluco; he expressed a desire of knowing what was the origin of their quarrel, for he understood that Carlostein was the person Zeluco was to have met, had he not been prevented by the accident just mentioned.

Carlostein refrained from mentioning the real source of the quarrel, saying, it was an unlucky business, of a delicate nature, which he was not at liberty to reveal, expressing at the same time a humane concern for the condition

of Zeluco, and the highest esteem for Bertram, with whose character Mr. N—— had acquainted him.

Carlostein and Mr. N—— were still conversing with Bertram, when the officers of justice arrived. Zeluco being acquainted with this, desired to see them; in the bitterest terms he accused Nerina of being an accomplice of the fellow who had stabbed him; declared that he recollected this man to be the same whom she had brought to Naples in her service, and had dismissed at his request. Nerina did not suspect that Zeluco had recognised this man; she therefore denied that she had ever seen him; but the maid, who was examined apart, acknowledged that he was the person who had formerly been in Nerina's service, and with whom she had been connected ever since. They were both carried to prison.

CHAPTER XCVI.

Carlostein visits Zeluco.

Zeluco having demanded of Bertram whether he heard any thing of the gentleman whom he was to have met, Bertram informed him that Carlostein was then in the house, and of his humane behaviour ever since he had heard of the unlucky accident.

Zeluco expressing a desire to speak with him alone, Carlostein was introduced.

'It is doubtful, signor,' said Zeluco, 'when, or if ever, it will be in my power to meet you in the way we had agreed upon; but it would be satisfactory to me in the meantime to know whether you and Captain Seidlits received from my wife the impressions which both of you seem to entertain.'

Carlostein replied, that both he and Seidlits had received the impressions he alluded to from certain circumstances they had themselves observed, without their having been pointed out by any third person whatever; that as for his own part he had never once seen Laura since

her being first taken ill, and that he knew she had been at great pains both before and since her illness, to make her brother believe that she lived on the best terms with her husband, and seemed extremely unhappy when she perceived that Captain Seidlits suspected the contrary, and had endeavoured by every means to convince him that his suspicion was ill-founded.

Zeluco seemed satisfied with this explanation; 'I have a curiosity to know also,' said he, 'if you have no objection, what was your inducement to draw upon yourself a quarrel which Captain Seidlits was sufficiently eager to make his own?'

'As you say this will afford you satisfaction, signor,' replied Carlostein, 'I shall not scruple to tell you, that when I heard Captain Seidlits express himself in the manner he did to you at your last meeting, I thought it probably would produce a quarrel between you, which might end fatally to one or other; whichever fell, the consequence would be unfortunate for Madame de Seidlits and her daughter; the former must lose a son-in-law, and the latter a brother or husband; whereas my being your antagonist could not have such ill consequences; if the chance went against me, they would be deprived of no such near relation; and even in the event of your falling by my sword, they would be involved in less trouble than if you should owe your death to their nearest relation.'

'It is impossible not to admire your conduct, sir,' said Zeluco; 'you must take a prodigious interest in those two ladies.'

'There are no two persons on earth, signor, for whom I have a greater regard; their virtues command the esteem of all who have the honour of knowing them; but independent of my friendship for them, I will confess to you, that another consideration had weight with me; I am indebted for my own life to the gallantry of Captain Seidlits; I was desirous therefore of seizing, without his knowledge, a chance of repaying what I owed him, by

taking the consequences, whatever they might be, of a meeting with you.'

'Captain Seidlits is much to be envied,' said Zeluco, with a sigh, 'in having such a friend;—perhaps,' continued he, after a pause, 'it may yet be in my power to convince both you and your friend, that what you have mistaken in my conduct was entirely owing to the malice and base suggestions of the accursed woman who is carried to prison, and who, I trust, will meet the fate she so well deserves.'

To this Carlostein made no reply: but the physician, who had also been sent for to visit Zeluco, arriving, put an end to their discourse.

The physician had not met the surgeon, and of course could have no just notion of the degree of danger in which Zeluco was; but finding him pretty free from fever, he ventured to pronounce still more favourably of the case than the surgeon had done; and after giving some general directions, took his leave.

Bertram remained at Zeluco's earnest request, and by his orders had the direction of every thing in the family; for the house, and all within it, was the property of Zeluco, except the wearing apparel of Nerina, which she had been permitted to pack up; and what she did not take with her was left under the care of a maid in whom she placed confidence.

Carlostein and Mr. N—— returned to Naples after hearing the opinion of the physician.

Carlostein gave his friend Seidlits an account of the whole affair; stating it in such a manner, however, that his intended meeting with Zeluco appeared to have been owing to a fortuitous rencounter with him the preceding evening, in which Zeluco had directly challenged him. Seidlits seemed displeased at his friend for concealing this.—'How could I, my dear Seidlits,' said Carlostein, 'shuffle over on you the answer of a challenge directly addressed to myself?—Would you have acted so?'

'Well,' said Seidlits, recovering his good humour, 'al-

though, from certain circumstances which I now recollect, I still suspect that some fraudulent practices have taken place on this occasion, yet I shall take no farther notice of them; since, however,' added he, smiling, 'you tried to rob me of a small sprig of laurel, I rejoice that it has missed your head as well as mine.'

They then informed Signora Sporza of all that had happened, leaving it to her to mention it to Madame de Seidlits, when she found a fit opportunity; but they all agreed to keep it concealed from Laura, till the fate of Zeluco should be more fully ascertained.

Zeluco continued tolerably easy till towards midnight, when the pain of his wound became very severe; amidst his groans he poured forth horrid imprecations against Nerina.

The assistant surgeon, who had been left to attend him, finding that the fomentations and other means which he used to relieve the pain failed, spoke of sending to Naples for some laudanum, a few drops of which, he said, might be of service.

Zeluco hearing him give orders for that purpose, told the surgeon to search one of his pockets, where he found a phial full of that drug—Zeluco having secretly provided himself with it, soon after a conversation with Nerina, which has been already mentioned.—Whether he would ever have used it for the purpose to which she meant to prompt him, can never be known; for the most profligate of mankind often shrink from executing the crimes which they have in speculation.

The surgeon administered a dose of this medicine, which abated the pain, and gave him some hours rest.

CHAPTER XCVII

What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
The soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy,
Is virtue's prize. Pope.

The following morning early, Bertram understanding that Zeluco was awake, entered his room to inquire how he was. Being then pretty easy and refreshed by sleep, he begged that Bertram would sit by his bed-side; and as the story of Antonio had made some impression on him, he began to make more inquiry concerning him: after a few questions he said to Bertram, 'On the whole, I perceive that this Savoyard has put you to a considerable deal of expense, as well as trouble.'

'I have already been amply repaid,' said Bertram; 'but I still expect an additional recompense.'

'I understand the fellow *had nothing*,' said Zeluco.

'He has both a father and a mother,' replied Bertram, 'very honest people, as I have been told; they live at Chamberry, which is in my way home to Geneva; the poor old couple have been miserable on account of their son's misfortune. I shall have the pleasure of restoring him to them;—only think, signor, what satisfaction I shall have—their old hearts will be ready to burst with joy.—I often anticipate, in my imagination, the scene of their first meeting;—why, signor, a single scene of that kind is worth all the five acts of dull selfish life.'

'You enter into these people's happiness as if it were your own,' said Zeluco.

'A great part of it will be my own,' said Bertram; 'I question if any of the three will be much happier than myself. You must have often felt, signor, what a pleasing sensation being the author of happiness conveys to the heart.'

Zeluco seemed distressed, and made no reply.

'I fear your wound gives you pain,' said Bertram,

'Not at all,' said Zeluco; 'and this is the only recompense you expect?'

'It is all I would accept of from man,' replied Bertram; 'the consciousness of a good action is delightful when performed, and is also a source of pleasing recollection through life. Would to God I had more of them to boast of! being conscious of but few, makes me perhaps too vain of this.'

'You have reason to be vain indeed,' said Zeluco.

'I am certain at least,' rejoined Bertram, 'that I should have been lower in my own eyes had I acted otherwise:—yet I make no doubt but you, and many others, would have done the same thing with less hesitation than I shewed.'

Zeluco groaned.

'I am heartily sorry to see you in so much pain,' said Bertram; 'shall I call the surgeon?'

'No, no' cried Zeluco; 'the surgeon cannot relieve me.'

'I fear talking does you harm; I'll leave——'

'Pray stay,' said Zeluco; 'I shall be worse when you go.—Tell me, my friend, what fortune have you?'

Bertram named a very moderate sum.

'And with this you are happy!' exclaimed Zeluco.

'With this I am contented,' replied Bertram; 'and I am happy in many other particulars;—riches cannot give happiness.'

'I'll be sworn they cannot,' said Zeluco; 'yet I am surprised that you, who have been abroad in the world, and have seen extensive scenes of life, could be contented with so little.'

'Perhaps,' replied Bertram, 'the circumstance you mention has contributed to it; for limited as my circumstances always were, I saw multitudes of my fellow-creatures, in every country where I have been, much poorer than myself; but what had more influence than any thing in keeping me from discontent was the remembrance of a maxim often repeated to me by my excellent father.'

'What is that maxim?' said Zeluco.

'When you are disposed to be vain of your mental acquirements, Bertram,' said he, 'look up to those who are more accomplished than yourself, that you may be fired with emulation. But when you feel dissatisfied with your circumstances, look down on those beneath you, that you may learn contentment.'

'But even of the small pittance you mention,' said Zeluco, 'you allowed a considerable portion to your father.'

'For that I can claim no merit,' said Bertram; 'it is only a proof that I am not a monster.—Ingratitude to a parent is the height of profligacy, including almost every kind of wickedness.'

Zeluco started as if he had been stung by a serpent; the recollection of his own behaviour to his mother rushed on his mind with all the bitterness of remorse.

'I really am grieved, signor,' said Bertram, in a sympathizing tone of voice, 'to see you suffer so much.'

'I do indeed suffer,' said Zeluco, after a long and painful pause.

'I am sincerely sorry for it,' resumed Bertram; 'I wish I knew what would give you relief;—but the medical people will be here soon;—they perhaps——'

'No, no,' interrupted Zeluco, 'they cannot relieve me.'

'I hope, my good sir,' continued Bertram, taking him by the hand, 'that after the next dressing your wound will become easier.'

'My wound *is* easier,' said Zeluco with a voice of anguish; 'but I have deeper wounds which their skill cannot reach.'

'Alas!' said Bertram; 'some mental affliction; the loss of some dear friend perhaps, cut off by a similar but more fatal accident than what has now befallen you.—Have patience, my good sir,' continued he, 'reflection, and the soothing hand of time——'

'I tell you,' interrupted Zeluco, in the accent of de-

spair, 'that I never had a friend; that time developes fresh sources of sorrow to me; and reflection drives me to madness.'

Bertram, being greatly shocked, made no reply; and Zeluco, after a considerable interval, having recollected himself, said, with apparent composure, 'I have been feverish and restless; I know not what I say; but the pain seems now to abate, and I feel myself drowsy. Pray, my good friend, leave me;—perhaps I may get a little sleep before the surgeon arrives.'

When Zeluco found himself alone—'Happy man!' said he, with a deep sigh, 'who can look back with pleasure and self-approbation, and forward with tranquillity and hope.—What false estimates are formed by mankind! This Bertram they will consider as an unfortunate man, yet he has never been unhappy, and has found many sources of enjoyment unknown to me. I have been reckoned remarkably fortunate, although I have never known what happiness is.—His life has been devoted to duty, and mine to enjoyment; yet it is evident he has had more enjoyment in his pursuit than I ever had in mine; I begin to think that pleasure is most frequently found while we are on some more worthy pursuit, and missed by those who are in search of nothing else.—O fool! fool! to sacrifice the permanent rewards of virtue, without enjoying the only allurement of vice. After having passed my life hitherto in disquietude, I am now stretched on a bed of danger, without a friend, or one person I can trust, except this stranger, Bertram, on whom I have no claim but that of humanity and benevolence, which I myself have so little practised.'

After these general reflections on his past conduct, when he turned his thoughts to Laura, all his former causes of suspicion appeared in their native weakness; for anguish, languor, and humbled pride, presented her conduct in a more candid point of view, untinged by the medium of jealousy, and stripped of the glosses of Nerina. 'Ah, that perfidious and accursed woman!' exclaimed he, en-

deavouring to relieve the anguish of his own conscience, by throwing the greater part of the guilt upon another; 'I should never have behaved as I did to the most virtuous of women, had I not been instigated by a demon.'

In reflexions of this kind, and in resolutions of altering his system of life, Zeluco passed the time till the surgeon arrived to dress his wound. Upon this second examination, the surgeon was confirmed in the opinion he had formed at first, that the wound was mortal; he thought proper to tell Zeluco, however, that it looked as well as he expected, and added other expressions of an encouraging nature.

When he returned to the parlour, he found Carlostein with Bertram, and immediately after Father Mulo also arrived.

The surgeon then fairly told them, that although he had said nothing to his patient which would depress his spirits, yet he now had little or no hopes of his recovery.

'If that is your real opinion,' said Father Mulo, 'why did you not inform the unhappy gentleman of the danger he is in?'

'Because it is my business, father,' replied the surgeon, 'to cure him, if it is possible, and not to diminish the very small chance of his recovery by disagreeable news.'

'You acted otherwise when you attended him formerly,' replied Father Mulo; 'for you then made him believe he was in more danger than was really the case.'

'That is a remark, my reverend father' said the surgeon, 'which I hardly could have expected from you: yet you are too learned in your profession not to know the *use of terror* in rendering mankind obedient. At the time you allude to, it was expedient to give this gentleman a strong idea of his danger, that he might submit to the regimen necessary for his cure; but at present it would disquiet him without being of any manner of use.'

'Why, sir,' rejoined the monk, 'it may be of the greatest use.'

'In my humble opinion,' said the surgeon, 'it cannot be of the least, as I dare say those gentlemen will acknowledge when I declare, I do not think it possible he can live above two, or at most three days.'

'Jesus Maria!' cried the father, turning up his eyes; 'why, for that very reason, sir, it is your indispensable duty, on such an occasion, to tell him the truth.'

'There is no cause for being in a heat, father,' said the surgeon, bowing; 'but I cannot think it consistent with *politeness* to tell a gentleman a disagreeable and unnecessary truth on *any* occasion.—I will refer it to this gentleman,' continued he, addressing himself to Carlostein, who he knew had been at Paris, 'whether in France such a thing would not be considered as quite unpardonable?'

'How it would be considered in France is very little to the purpose,' said Father Mulo; 'the important point is, how it will be considered in the other world, where the manner of thinking is very different from what it is in France.'

'That is saying a severer thing of the other world than I should have expected from a man of your cloth,' said the surgeon.

'Will you, or will you not go directly and acquaint your patient of his danger?' said Father Mulo.

'You cannot possibly imagine, my good father,' replied the surgeon, 'that I will behave so *unpolitely* to a gentleman, especially when he is on the point of leaving the world.'

'Why, sir,' rejoined the father warmly, 'by concealing his danger from him he may die without confession, and his soul of course will be lost for ever.'

'As for his soul, and whether it shall be lost or saved, that is his affair, or your's, if you please, my good father; but it is mine not to deviate from the laws of *good-breeding* and *politeness*.' So saying, with a low bow to the company, he stepped into his carriage, and drove to Naples.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

Thou canst enter the dark cell
Where the vulture conscience slumbers,
And unarm'd by charming spell,
Or magic numbers,
Canst rouse her from her formidable sleep,
And bid her dart her raging talons deep.

MASON.

On his departure, Father Mulo shewed great impatience to be introduced into Zeluco's bedchamber, and to acquaint him with the dangerous state he was in, that every ceremony requisite for his salvation might be performed without loss of time. Captain Seidlits and Bertram being Protestants, and thinking that the intended ceremony of confession would not do so much good as the monk's abrupt manner of communicating the immediate necessity of it would do harm, endeavoured to persuade him to defer it a little, as Zeluco seemed disposed to sleep when the surgeon left him. While they disputed the point the physician arrived; he had met with the surgeon, who had informed him that there was now a certainty of the bowels being pierced in such a manner as to leave very little or no hopes of the patient's recovery.

It was the opinion of all present, that this information would come with more propriety from him than from Father Mulo: out of tenderness to the unhappy man, therefore, he was desired to convey it.

With whatever delicacy the annunciation was made by the physician, it seemed greatly to shock the patient, for till that moment he had little doubt of his surviving. He immediately renewed all his curses and imprecations against Nerina, with such violence, that the physician thought proper to withdraw. What repelled the doctor attracted the monk. Father Mulo entered, and began an exhortation which had by no means the same soporific effect on Zeluco with the former, of which we have made mention, but seemed on the contrary to throw him almost

into convulsions. 'You see, my worthy father,' said Bertram, 'that he is in too much pain to listen to your admonitions at present; you had best leave him a little, and perhaps, after he has recovered the shock he has just received, he will be able to profit by your kind intentions.'

After Father Mulo had been with difficulty removed, Zeluco desired to see the physician again, of whom he inquired once more if there absolutely was no hope of his recovery. The physician expressed much uneasiness at being obliged to confirm the opinion which he had already given; adding, that although the wound, from the different functions of the parts injured, was not so *immediately* mortal, yet he feared it would prove as *certainly* so as if the poignard had pierced his heart. Zeluco then asked, how long the physician thought he could live? to which the other answered, there was reason to believe he could not suffer above two or three days longer.

Zeluco made no answer, and continued several hours without speaking a word to any body, but sometimes muttered indistinct sentences to himself, and shewed marks of impatience when any discourse was addressed to him. He at length inquired whether Captain Seidlits had been to call for him, and expressed a desire of seeing him. The captain, who was just taking his horse to go to Naples, immediately returned, and was introduced to Zeluco's bedchamber, every other person being requested to retire. Zeluco then addressed him to the following effect.—

'Amidst many sources of regret, none affects me so sensibly, sir, as my behaviour to your sister. Prompted by headstrong passion, I used every means I could devise, some of them not justifiable, to prevail on her to consent to a marriage to which I plainly saw she had a rooted dislike. When, by the continuation of my artifices, and the persuasion of her mother, she gave a reluctant consent, it might have been expected that, happy in the attainment of my wishes, I should have behaved with kindness and affection to her; however difficult it was for

her to behave in the same manner towards me. The fact was otherwise: had *I* conducted myself with half the good-nature to the wife I really esteemed, and even admired, that *she* did to the husband she disliked, I should not feel the remorse I now do. On recalling to my memory the whole of her conduct, I cannot charge her with a single impropriety; but in spite of her most blameless conduct, I plainly saw she did not love me: every duty of a wife which was in her power she fulfilled; her affection it was impossible for her to place upon me, and this I had the injustice to consider as an injury. I indulged groundless suspicions, which were cherished; and new ones of the most profligate nature were suggested by a devil in the shape of a woman, who, by the wickedest artifices, entangled my affections, stimulated my passions into madness, and was the cause of even involuntary crimes. I earnestly hope she will be brought to the punishment her guilt and perfidy deserve. I earnestly hope—but let me drive her from my thoughts,—let no more time be lost, but let me at length make all the expiation in my power.

'I was willing that you should know, sir, that these were my sentiments, which at a proper time you will communicate to the most virtuous and deserving of women.'

Seidlits was affected. The wretched condition to which he saw the man reduced, had long since dissipated all his animosity; with a sympathising accent, which was not very usual to him, and a sincerity which never forsook him, he expressed wishes for his recovery. Zeluco shook his head as if he thought that entirely out of the question, and Seidlits withdrew.

Zeluco then directed Bertram to send to Naples for his lawyer, who arrived in a short time, and received orders regarding his last will and deed, which were executed in due form, and signed by Zeluco the following morning, in the presence of certain persons who came from Naples at his request for that purpose.

CHAPTER XCIX.

Hail piety! triumphant goodness, hail!
Hail, O prevailing, ever O prevail!
At thine entreaty, justice leaves to frown,
And wrath appeasing lays the thunder down;
The tender heart of yearning mercy burns.

PARNELL.

The following day Laura was informed for the first time of her husband's being wounded, and that he was thought to be in danger. She was much more shocked at the intelligence than Signora Sporza who communicated it thought she had reason to be. Signora Sporza proceeded to inform her of the particulars,—on what occasion the accident had happened, and at what place her husband was then lying; those circumstances made no alteration in the feelings of Laura. 'May heaven in mercy,' cried she, 'prolong his life till he is better prepared for death! O how dreadful for him to be hurried into eternity now!' Signora Sporza insinuated something regarding the wretched prospect which Laura would have before her with such a husband, in case of his recovery. 'Ah!' cried Laura, 'is my temporal wretchedness to be put in the scale against his eternal misery? Almighty God, have compassion upon him!' exclaimed she, leaving Signora Sporza, and retiring to her bedchamber, where she immediately fell upon her knees before a crucifix; and, every selfish consideration being annihilated in her breast, with all the sincerity of the most sublime piety, she poured forth her prayers to the fountain of mercy, that the life of her husband might be preserved, and that heaven might inspire him with repentance, and extend mercy to him.

Returning to the room where her mother now was with Signora Sporza, she inquired for her brother, and was told he had gone early the same morning to see Zeluco.—'Has my brother sent no message since?' said Laura. Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza looked at each other as if they hesitated what answer they should give.

'I perceive you *have* heard from him,' cried Laura. 'Pray tell me how it is with the unfortunate man? Alas, I fear he is worse.'

'It is surprising,' said Signora Sporza, 'that you shew so much concern for one, who, had this not happened, might have been the cause of your brother's or your friend Carlostein's death.'

'Heaven be praised, they are both alive and well,' cried Laura, 'whereas this unhappy man is —— Ah tell me how he is? What account have you received from my brother?'—'The account is not favourable, my dear,' said Madame de Seidlits. 'Alas, he is gone,' cried Laura. 'Merciful heaven! has he been hurried off so suddenly?'—'Shew her the captain's letter,' said Madame de Seidlits. Signora Sporza then gave Laura a letter which she had received from Captain Seidlits a little before she informed Laura of what had befallen her husband, but which she abstained from shewing her upon seeing her so much affected. The letter was in the following words,—

'DEAR MADAM,

'The surgeons in the presence of the physician have just examined the wound; their opinions are the same as before, notwithstanding some of the attendants had begun to entertain hopes of a favourable turn, on account of his being a great deal easier for these two hours than he has ever been since he received the wound; he seems very weak and languid; he sometimes mentions my sister, and once inquired if she was in the house, but in a manner as if he wished rather than expected it: on being told she was not—'How could I imagine she would?' said he. 'Why should she think of a wretch like me?' I own I am affected at the dismal condition of this poor man. Yet it were highly improper that Laura should see him; it would be disagreeable to her, and might have very bad effects on her health: I imagine it would be right, however, to let her know in general what has happened, and

the danger in which he is. You will consult with Madame de Seidlits on this subject. I shall probably not leave this place till the evening. I am,' &c. &c.

'I *will* go and see him,' cried Laura, as soon as she had perused the letter. Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza endeavouring to dissuade her.—'I conjure you, my dear mother,' said she, 'as you value the future peace of my mind, do not oppose me. My sincere sympathy may comfort him in this sad hour of ——. Pray, do not oppose my inclination. Indeed, I must go.' Fearing that stronger opposition might have worse consequences than the interview they dreaded, the carriage was ordered, and Laura, with her mother, immediately proceeded to the house in which Zeluco lay.

Laura passed the whole time in which they were on the road, in ejaculations and fervent prayers to heaven, to look with an eye of mercy and compassion on her wretched husband.

When they arrived, Captain Seidlits came to the door of the carriage.—'O brother, how is he?' cried Laura. Seidlits shook his head, and was silent. 'Ah, miserable man,' exclaimed she, 'he is gone!'—'It is but a few minutes,' said Seidlits, 'since he breathed his last.'—'All-merciful God, have compassion on his soul!' cried Laura.

Madame de Seidlits then ordered the coach to return with them to Naples. Laura passed the interval of her return in the same manner she had done when going; and being arrived at Naples, she entreated her mother, instead of driving directly home, to stop at the church in which they usually heard mass, and there kneeling before the altar, she spent some time in mental prayer for the soul of her husband. After which, she sent for the priest, and directed that a certain number of masses might be performed for the same pious purpose.

Any person, ignorant of the real case, would naturally have imagined that Laura had been the happiest of

women in her marriage; for no woman deprived suddenly of the husband of her heart, was ever touched with more sincere anguish for her own misfortune, than the compassionate and benevolent breast of Laura was with generous solicitude for the eternal welfare of the husband who had used her so ill, and whom she had during his life detested.

When the last will of Zeluco came to be examined, which it was soon after his death, in the presence of two of the magistrates of Naples, of Captain Seidlits, Bertram, and others, it appeared that he had left his paternal estate in Sicily to a distant relation, who was his natural heir; and the rest of his fortune, which was of much greater value, to his widow, burdened with a few legacies, of which the principal was one of two thousand pistoles to Bertram, and another of one thousand to Captain Seidlits.

The relation of Zeluco, to whom he left the estate, had always been neglected by him, and had not the least expectation of the good fortune which now befel him. On his arrival at Naples, Laura having heard him spoken of as a man of worth, and that he had a family of children, made a considerable present in ready money to each of his children. She desired this gentleman also to give her a list of such of her husband's relations as were in bad circumstances; she had often made the same request to Zeluco with a view to assist them, but he had always evaded it, and shewed so much ill-humour every time she made the request, that she never had been able to put her good intentions towards those people in execution. The legacy to Bertram was immediately paid, to which Laura made a considerable addition, and he soon after set out with Antonio for Geneva, esteemed and loved by all who had known him.

Laura also used her interests to have Nerina treated with lenity while she was detained in confinement; and as it was clear that she was not directly accessary to the murder of Zeluco, she used her influence to soften the minds

of the judges, who were violently prejudiced against Nerina, so that she was at last liberated, and immediately after left Naples.

CHAPTER C.

The Conclusion.

Captain Seidlits's leave of absence was now nearly expired; he had often expressed his wishes that Madame de Seidlits and Laura would return to Germany with him; and urged, among other reasons, that it was expedient for his sister's health, and the tranquillity of her mind, that she were removed from a place where so many objects would awaken painful recollections; asserting, at the same time, that his mother-in-law and sister would now live much more happily in Germany than at Naples.

Signora Sporza had mentioned to Captain Seidlits her opinion that Carlostein was enamoured of his sister; but from a delicacy natural to the sex, she gave no hint concerning what she was as fully persuaded of, namely, Laura's partiality for him. Seidlits readily believed what he wished to be true, and the high idea he had of his friend, left him no doubt that their love was mutual.

Although Signora Sporza had communicated only one-half of her opinion on this subject to the captain, she unfolded the whole to Madame de Seidlits, who embraced the idea with great satisfaction; and the proposal of returning to Berlin became more agreeable to her from that moment.

It is probable that Laura relished the plan of ultimately settling in Germany fully as much as her mother; but she was solicitous to see certain distant relations of Zeluco established in a manner which she had pointed out, and in which she wished to assist them; the arrangements she had made for this purpose could not be effectual without her presence; nor could they be proper-

ly finished in the short interval that remained before her brother would be under the necessity of leaving Naples.

In the meantime Carlostein received a letter from the Prussian minister at Berlin, acquainting him that he was nominated by the king to an office at court which had just become vacant; and hinting that he would pay his court in a manner very acceptable to his majesty, by returning immediately with his friend Seidlits, without waiting for the expiration of his own leave of absence.

The pleasure which Carlostein would have felt from the knowledge of this mark of his sovereign's favour, did not prevent the hint with which it was accompanied from distressing him greatly. His passion for Laura, and his admiration of her conduct, were higher now than ever; and she continued to behave to him with every proper mark of confidence and esteem. But he plainly perceived that the death of Zeluco, and the circumstances attending it, had made a strong impression upon her, and had put her into a frame of mind which ill accorded with the subject that engrossed his. He therefore abstained from any direct declaration of his sentiments to her, and it is probable would not have ventured on any thing of that nature so soon, had it not been for this letter from Berlin; but he could not think of leaving Naples in the same undecided state, with regard to what he considered as the most important object of his life.

Without mentioning the contents of the minister's letter even to his friend Seidlits therefore, he watched an opportunity of speaking to Laura alone; and then in the warmest language of respectful love, he declared his admiration of her virtues, the sincerity of his passion, and the supreme wish of his heart.

The whole of Carlostein's conduct left no doubt of his sincerity in the mind of Laura, yet she shewed some surprise at the precipitancy of these declarations.—'I would have waited,' continued Carlostein, 'for opportunities of giving stronger proofs than have hitherto been in my

power of my attachment, before I had ventured to mention the honour and happiness to which I aspire, had I not received intelligence by yesterday's post, which fills my heart with ten thousand disquietudes.'

'Intelligence!' cried Laura.

'Of the most cruel import,' said Carlostein; 'which threatens to tear me, when I least expected, from all my soul holds dear.'

'What do you mean?' interrupted she, with an alarmed voice, and becoming instantly pale; 'pray, explain yourself.'

Carlostein then gave her the minister's letter, which she took with an unsteady hand.

Having perused it, she said, 'I see nothing here but good news; his majesty I find has done you the honour to appoint you to an office near his person.'

Carlostein pointed to the passage which hinted that the king expected him to return with Captain Seidlitz; and renewing his addresses, declared, that his happiness depended on her; that if he could flatter himself with the hope of her favour, he would immediately write to the minister in such terms as he had no doubt would procure him his majesty's approbation of his prolonging his stay at Naples; that no consideration could prevail on——

Laura interrupted him, desiring that he would not insist on a subject which he thought unbecoming her, as she was then situated, to listen to, adding, that she would not attempt to conceal the sentiments of esteem which she had always felt for him; she acknowledged that she valued his good opinion and friendship above that of any other man; that with respect to the minister's letter, she believed that such a hint as it contained, coming from a king or minister, was generally thought equivalent to a command; that he certainly could not consider it in any other light, and must act accordingly; that, independent of the minister's letter, she imagined there were considerations which might determine him not to remain longer

at Naples, and would oblige her not to receive his visits after the departure of her brother.

Carlostein seemed uneasy, and remained for some time silent after this declaration; but recollecting himself, he said, 'Your brother, I believe, is not entirely without hopes that Madame de Seidlits may be persuaded to leave this country, and return immediately with him to Germany.'

'My mother is so good as to assure me,' said Laura, 'that she will never separate herself from me, and certain affairs which I think indispensable will detain me a long time after my brother's departure.'

'A long time!' repeated Carlostein, with an accent of sorrow.

'I shall think it a long time,' said she, with a smile and a look which conveyed happiness to the heart of Carlostein; 'for I do assure you,' added she, 'that there is nothing which I wish more sincerely than to return to my native country.

Carlostein being now more assured in the hopes which he could not help indulging, did not venture to urge her further; for however favourable to him her sentiments might be, he plainly perceived that Laura thought it indelicate to admit of his addresses so soon after the death of her husband.

Immediately after leaving her, he communicated the minister's letter to his friend Seidlits, informing him at the same time that he would accompany him home.

The interval between this time and that of their departure, was spent almost entirely with Madame de Seidlits, Signora Sporza, and Laura; Mr. N—— was very frequently of the parties, every individual of the society having the highest esteem for that gentleman.

Carlostein earnestly wished to correspond with Laura after he should leave Naples. As she stood at a window apart from the rest of the company, he seized the occasion, and solicited her permission to write to her. Laura beckoned to her mother, who having joined them, she said,

'The baron, my dear madam, proposes to write to *us*, which I dare say will be very agreeable to you, and will prevent our having so much reason to regret my brother's want of punctuality.'

Madame de Seidlits, although she was convinced that the proposal was intended for Laura only, answered, that *they* should be happy to hear from him as often as his leisure permitted him to write.

The day immediately preceding the departure of Carlostein and Seidlits was to this society mournful, but not unhappy; the flow of the virtuous and tender affections of the heart, of benevolence, gratitude, friendship, and love, is never without enjoyment.

——— Who that bears
A human bosom, hath not often felt
How dear are all those ties which bind our race
In gentleness together, and how sweet
Their force, let fortune's wayward hand the while
Be kind or cruel?——

AKENSIDE.

Targe and Buchanan supped together *tête-à-tête* the same evening; they felt a mutual regard for each other; a mutual sorrow at the thought of separating, and they mutually agreed that the best way of disposing of sorrow is to wash it away with wine.

When the night was far advanced, Buchanan rose, shook his friend very cordially by the hand, saying, 'As you are to be up so early in the morning, I will not keep you any longer from your bed. So, God bless you, my dear Duncan.'

'Nay, God shall not bless me these three hours,' said Targe; 'for as I am to rise so early, I do not think it worth while to go to bed this night: so sit you down on your seat, George, and let us have a fresh bottle without farther ceremony.'

Buchanan, not being in a humour to dispute a point of this kind, immediately complied, slapping Targe upon the shoulder, and singing the following line from an old Scottish song,—

He's the king of good fellows, and wale * of auld men;

and never made another offer of taking leave, till he saw Targe ready to set out with his master and Carlostein.

The latter wrote from the various towns of Italy and Germany in the course of their journey to Berlin, addressing his letters alternately to Madame de Seidlits and to Laura. Captain Seidlits, who was not in love, and hated letter-writing, was contented with occasionally adding a postscript of a few sentences to Carlostein's letters.

This correspondence continued with equal regularity after their arrival at Berlin; and Carlostein, who had repeatedly begged of Madame de Seidlits to let him know the exact time when she and Laura intended to leave Italy, at length wrote to her that he would be happy to return to Naples, merely that he might have the honour of accompanying them to Berlin, and earnestly entreated her to use her influence with Laura to consent to that measure; for which he said he was assured of the king's permission.

Madame de Seidlits could not give a satisfactory answer for a considerable time, because, although Laura herself was impatient to leave Naples, yet she had resolved to remain till she settled her affairs in such a manner as not to require her returning: this she accomplished at length, having at the same time gratified her own benevolent and generous disposition by doing, what she called, justice to the relations of Zeluco, in a degree far beyond their expectations; and so as to procure their fervent prayers for her happiness, and the admiration of all who were acquainted with her behaviour.

At the approach of summer, Madame de Seidlits gave Carlostein the joyful news, that Laura and she were immediately to set out on their return to Germany, and that they could not think of putting him to the inconveniency of coming so far as Naples, especially as his friend Mr. N—— being to return at the same time to England, had offered to accompany them the whole way to Berlin; that

* Wale, or choice.

they had agreed to accept of his escort, however, no farther than to Milan, which did not lead him out of the route that at all events he would have taken. At Milan, Madame de Seidlits added, she had a friend who would accompany them to Dresden; and as they could not reach that city for a considerable time after the Prussian reviews were over, she hoped it would not be inconvenient to Carlostein to meet them there, at a time which she mentioned, from whence he might accompany them to Berlin.

When Madame de Seidlits, Laura, and Signora Sporza, attended by Mr. N——, arrived at the inn at Milan, they were greatly surprised to find Carlostein and Captain Seidlits ready to hand them out of the carriage. Carlostein had received his mother-in-law's letter during the reviews; his friend and he set out for Milan soon after, and arrived sometime before the ladies.

The unexpected appearance of these two gentlemen certainly occasioned an agreeable sensation to the company just arrived; but it was too strong for the sensibility of Laura. She could not help being a good deal agitated, the consciousness of which increased her confusion; every body observed the manner in which she was affected, and all had the delicacy to impute it to the fatigue of the journey. Laura soon recovered her usual serenity, and the whole party spent a few very happy weeks at Milan; during which Mr. N—— received a letter from the earl his father, informing him that Miss Warren had consented to give her hand to his friend Steele, to the infinite satisfaction of old Mr. Transfer and Mrs. Steele, as well as that of Lady Elizabeth and the earl himself; and that the nuptial ceremony was delayed till Mr. N——'s arrival in England, all parties being desirous that he should be present on that happy occasion.

This intelligence afforded much pleasure to Mr. N——, who had great good-will to Steele, and a very high esteem for Miss Warren, and was besides of a frame of mind which takes delight in the happiness of others. With

this charming disposition Mr. N—— must have been highly gratified in the contemplation of the company he was then in, each individual of which was in a state of felicity.

Signora Sporza, who loved Laura with an affection little inferior to that of her mother, could not conceal her joy in the persuasion she had of the approaching happiness of her young friend; for it was now obvious that her marriage with Carlostein would take place soon after their arrival at Berlin. Captain Seidlits was delighted with the idea of his beloved sister's being united to the man whom of all mankind he loved and esteemed the most. The satisfaction of Madame de Seidlits, it may be easily supposed, was equal to both theirs. Laura and Carlostein saw in each other all that their imaginations conceived as amiable; and they beheld in the faces of their surrounding friends a generous joy at the prospect of their felicity, and an impatience to see them speedily united.

It would have been difficult for Mr. N—— to have resisted the importunities of his friends and his own inclination, to accompany them to Berlin, had he not received the letter above mentioned from his father; this determined him to follow the plan he had formed on leaving Naples.

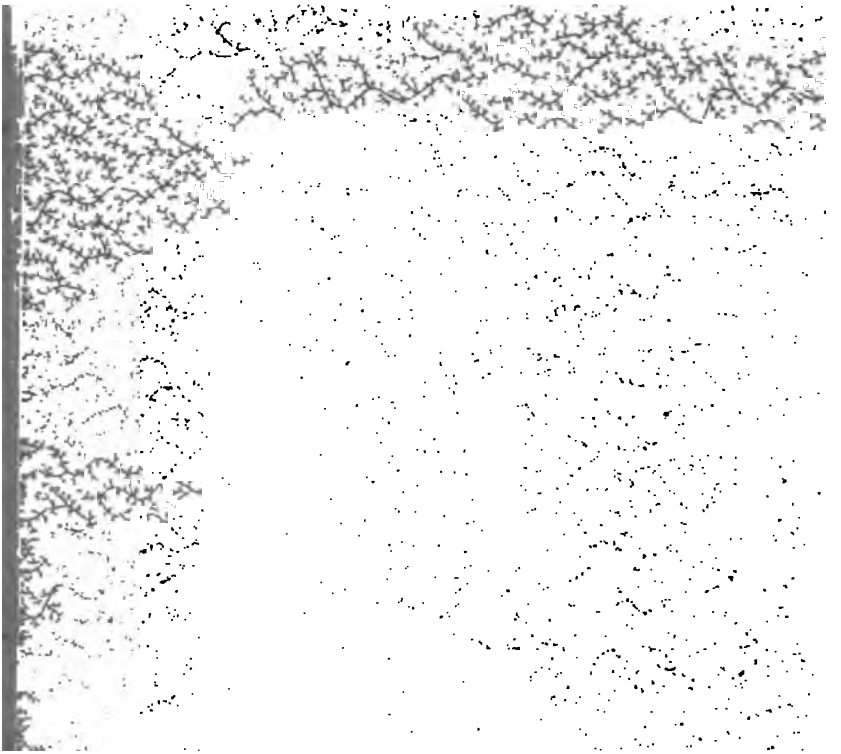
After expressing hopes of meeting again in Germany, or perhaps in England, Mr. N—— took a most affectionate leave of a company he so greatly esteemed, carrying with him the friendship and best wishes of every person in it. The ladies, escorted by Carlostein and Captain Seidlits, set out for Berlin on the same day that Mr. N—— took his route for Geneva, where he proposed to pass a few days with Bertram, and endeavour, if possible, to prevail on him to accompany him to England.

On his arrival at Turin, where he stopped only one night, he wrote an answer to his father's letter, the conclusion of which was in the following terms.—

'I AM every day more confirmed in the truth of what you, my dear sir, took so much pains to impress early on my mind, that misery is inseparable from vice, and that the concurrence of every fortunate circumstance cannot produce happiness, or even tranquillity, independent of conscious integrity.

'Had I harboured doubts on this head, the fate of a person with whom I had some acquaintance at Naples, would have served to dissipate them; the particulars of this wretched man's story I will communicate to you at more leisure. I need only mention at present, that with every advantage of person, birth, and fortune, and united by marriage to the most beautiful and accomplished woman I ever had the happiness of knowing, he was miserable through the whole of his life, entirely owing to the selfishness and depravity of his heart. I am equally convinced that it is not in the power of external circumstances to render that man, who is in possession of integrity and the blessing of an applauding conscience, so wretched as the person above alluded to often was in the midst of prosperity and apparent happiness. An acquaintance I lately formed with another person, a citizen of Geneva, of a character the reverse of the former, and whom I am not without hopes of presenting to you at my return, tends to confirm this opinion, and to convince me that the poet is right in declaring,

> 'The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
> Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears.'

END OF VOL. V.

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